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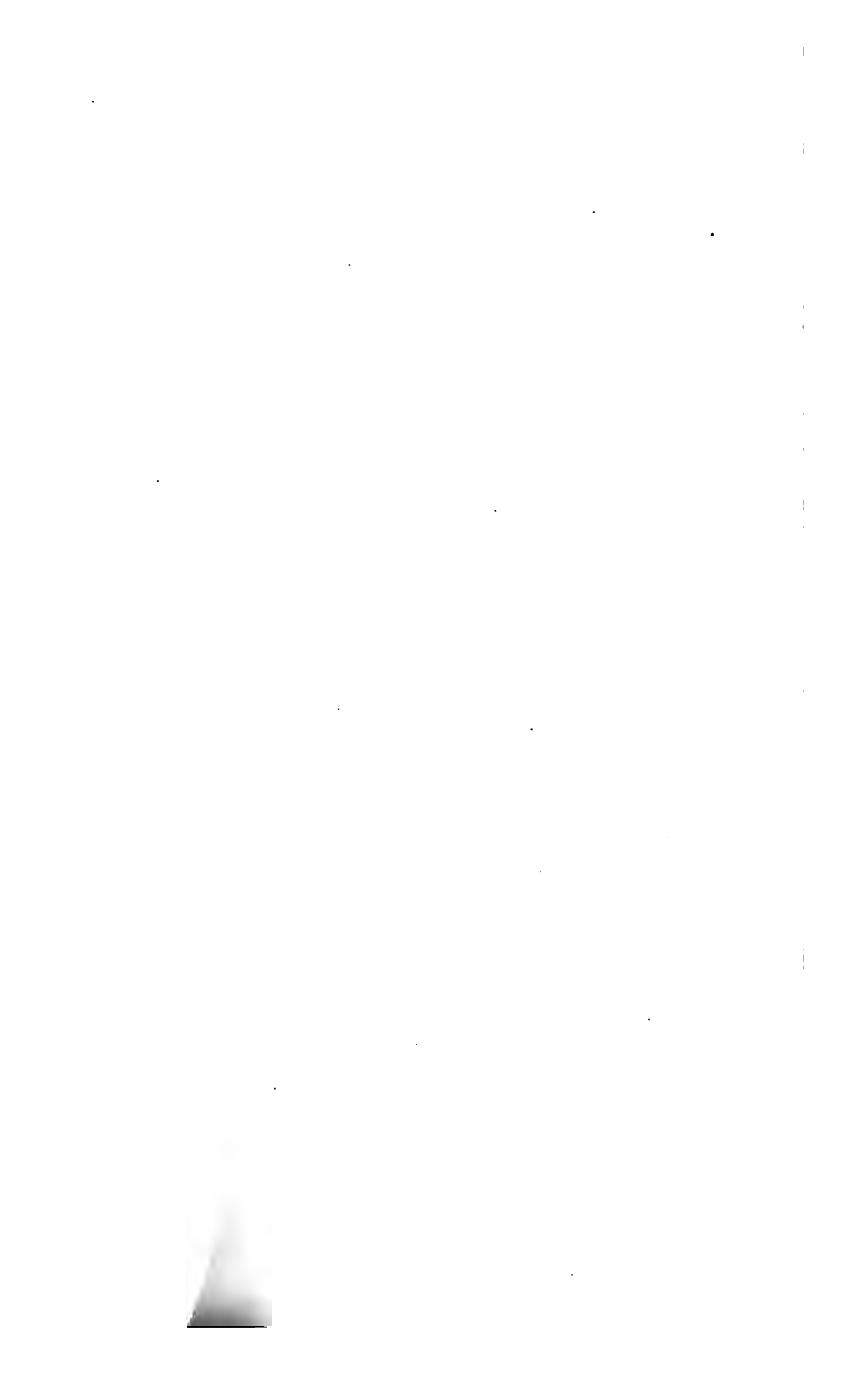
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James Lenox.

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LETTERS

OF THE

REV. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD,

LATE PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY AT ST. ANDREWS.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS ERSKINE, ESQ.

ADVOCATE.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

To understand the doctrines of the Bible aright, it is of the greatest importance to form just ideas of what is meant by the word "salvation," as many of the practical errors into which men have fallen on the subject of Christianity, have arisen from a misconception of this term: some supposing it to refer merely to the pardon of sin, and others to an undefined happiness in a future state.

To assist our inquiries into this most interesting subject, it is of importance to examine the different passages of Scripture in which this term is used, and to compare it with other terms which are frequently employed as synonymous with it.

In Scripture, the term *salvation*, with its grammatical branches, is applied to the bodies as well as to the souls of men. When applied to the body, it varies in its meaning according to the state or condition of those who are the subjects of it. These conditions are chiefly two, namely, first, a state of danger arising from causes external to the body, such as shipwreck, war, or famine; and, secondly, a state of danger arising from disease within the body.

First, When the term *salvation* is applied to persons in a state of danger from external causes, it means an external act, corresponding to the nature of the danger by which the cause of the danger is removed, and security restored. Thus, in the description of the shipwreck, given in the 27th chapter of the Acts, the word $\sigma\omega\zeta\omega$, is used to signify deliverance from the danger of the sea: "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away."—"Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." And in the following chapter, verse 1st, the word translated *escaped* is derived from the same root. In the Septuagint the same word is applied to those who have escaped from battle. When our Lord, in the agony of his soul, prays that the bitter cup of suffering might pass from him, he uses the same word: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." Jude applies it to the deliverance from the land of Egypt: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." In these cases salvation means simply such a change upon the external circumstances, in which the body is placed, that danger is removed, and safety recovered. No change is produced on the body itself, but only on its situation, with regard to other things.

Secondly, When this term is applied to the case

of persons labouring under disease, it signifies an internal operation, suited also to the evil which it remedies, by which the inward principle of the malady is counteracted, and the bodily organs restored to healthful exercise. This is the most common use of the word in the New Testament, when it refers to the body. In this sense it occurs in most of the narratives of our Lord's miraculous cures, and is rendered in our translation by various English phrases, such as "made whole"—"For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole."—"Healed"—"They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed."—"He shall do well"—"Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." In these cases salvation does not mean a change upon circumstances external to the body, but upon the internal condition of the body itself.

The distinction between these two classes of cases is obvious. In both an external agent is supposed to apply the remedy, but the operation of this agent differs according to the nature of the evil. In the first class it is directed to the external circumstances

in which the body is placed—in the second, it is directed to the body itself.

We frequently see these two kinds of salvation conjoined—thus a man is imprisoned on suspicion of a crime, and in consequence of the unhealthiness of the place is seized with the jail fever—at last he is acquitted, and his liberation is followed by restored health. Here the one salvation is the effect of the other, and is indeed the only thing which could make the other valuable. Take another instance: A man loses his health from the use of improper food—a benevolent person, by supplying him with proper food, restores his health. Here the external evil is unwholesome food, and the internal is disease. There are also two kinds of salvation, corresponding to these two evils, the one of which, however, is entirely subservient to the other. The change of food is made simply for the purpose of restoring health, and if this effect does not follow, nothing has been accomplished which can properly be called salvation, the whole plan has failed. Salvation then properly refers to the ultimate object in the series. If a man is simply in danger of being lost by shipwreck, his ultimate object is to be safe on dry land: but if the fear of this danger has deprived him of his reason, then the recovery of his mental health becomes the ultimate object, and the salvation from shipwreck becomes merely a step to the salvation of his reason. So if a man has the disease of cancer, he may be delivered from the cancer by the knife: but then the salvation from the cancer is subservient to the salvation of his health, and unless this consequence follows, the object has failed.

The minuteness of these observations may seem tedious, but we have been led to them from the persuasion, that a greater attention to the analogy which subsists between the treatment of the body under danger or disease, and the gospel scheme of salvation, would very much increase the accuracy of our ideas on religious subjects. Salvation from bodily disease is frequently expressed by the word "life:" "Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."—"And he besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." In which last instance, "she shall live," is used as explanatory of "that she may be healed." Life in these cases evidently signifies the full exercise of the animal faculties, and when it follows sickness, is synonymous with a confirmed cure. This same salvation is also expressed by the term "loosing," or freeing from the bondage of pain: "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?"

We now proceed to consider the import of the term salvation when applied to the soul. Salvation, when applied to the soul, refers also to two kinds of evils which, though different in their nature, are yet always conjoined—the one being external to the soul, the other internal—the first consisting in the sentence of God against the soul, on account of dis-

obedience, the second consisting in the diseased and depraved state of the soul itself.

The first of these evils, namely, the sentence of God against the soul on account of disobedience, consists in an eternal exclusion from the family and favour of God. The second evil, namely, the diseased state of the soul itself, consists in that disposition which leads to disobedience. Salvation from the first of these evils may be termed a judicial acquittal. Salvation from the second, a recovery of spiritual health.

In order to understand and adore the wisdom of God in redemption, it is necessary to understand the way in which these two kinds of salvation are connected, for they are never disjoined. Now there are two ways in which things may be conjoined, namely, by arbitrary connection, and by natural connection. As an instance of the first, we may take the obligation under which a man lies to take certain oaths, when he is intrusted with certain offices under government. There is no natural or necessary connection between these two things, the connection arises out of law or usage: the man *may* take the oaths without getting the office. As instances of the second, we may take the connection which subsists between a man's being a father, and having a kindness for his children, or between a man's receiving a favour and feeling gratitude.

It may here be argued, with justice, that as God is the God of nature, every connection which he appoints becomes a natural connection. This is not denied, and all that is meant here by natural connec-

tion is such a relation between two things, that to our minds the existence of the one appears indispensable to the existence of the other, or at least that the existence of the one appears to us, in the ordinary course of things, to lead to the existence of the other.

Let us now take a short view of the gospel system, that we may perceive *how* the two kinds of salvation therein revealed are connected, that is, how pardon through a Saviour is connected with the recovery of spiritual health, and also that we may perceive which of the two is the *ultimate object* in God's dealings with men.

The Bible informs us that man has fallen from God's favour, and from his own natural happiness, by having a will different from God's will, and by acquiring a character and pursuing a conduct opposite to God's character and conduct. Mere pardon to a creature in this situation would be comparatively of small consequence, because his unhappiness arose necessarily out of his character, and, therefore, unless his character were changed, his unhappiness remained the same. The enjoyments of God's family were things contrary to his corrupted taste and choice, and, therefore, his free admission into them, could be no blessing to him. In order to his happiness, the restoration of his lost privileges must be accompanied by a restoration of the capacity to enjoy them. For this reason, when God invited his rebellious creatures to return to his favour and family, he did it in such a way, that the soul which truly accepted of the invitation, imbibed at the same time, the principles of a new character.

There is a difference between the body and the mind which should here be taken notice of. The body may be perfectly capable of enjoyment, and yet at the same time perfectly miserable, in consequence of being precluded from the means of enjoyment. Thus a man in a perfect state of health may be made unhappy by being fettered in a noisome dungeon, where he is debarred from the exercise of those animal faculties, the gratification of which constitutes animal enjoyment. But we cannot apply this reasoning to the mind. A perfectly healthful state of mind, according to the appointment of him who changeth not, is inseparably connected with mental enjoyment. The happiness of God arises necessarily out of his character, and the mental health of intelligent creatures, which is in fact nothing more nor less than a resemblance to the character of God, must also be inseparably connected with happiness. So that perfect mental health is not simply the *capacity* for enjoyment; it may perhaps more properly be said to constitute enjoyment itself. The same, or similar causes, must produce the same or similar effects, and if the character of God is the cause of his happiness, a similar character, (with reverence be it spoken) must produce a similar happiness. And this happiness can be produced by no other character, for that would be to suppose that opposite causes could produce the same effects.

If this be so, it follows, that a restoration to spiritual health, or conformity to the divine character, is the *ultimate object* of God in his dealings with the children of men. Whatever else God hath done

with regard to men, has been subsidiary, and with a view to this; even the unspeakable work of Christ, and pardon freely offered through his cross, have been but means to a farther end; and that end is, that the adopted children of the family of God might be conformed to the likeness of their elder brother—that they might resemble him in character, and thus enter into his joy. This is spiritual health, and it is acquired by the blessing of God upon the reception and faithful use of the means which he hath appointed and made known to us in the history of his mercy through a Saviour. Free offer of pardon through the Son of God is termed *salvation*, just in the same way that a medicine is, in common language, called *a cure*; that is, they do not strictly constitute salvation—they only produce it. Before entering on the consideration of those passages which confirm this view of the subject, we shall endeavour to make our meaning more distinctly understood. It must be remembered always, that the love of God with the whole heart, is not only the sum of all that duty which is positively enjoined on us by the divine law, under an awful penalty, but also, that it is the only principle which can produce or maintain spiritual health. Our failure, therefore, in obedience to this law of love, not only exposes us to the penalty denounced against disobedience, but also plants in our souls the seeds of disease.

Let us suppose, that the inhabitants of any district were liable to an epidemic disorder, which, from the partial derangement accompanying it, naturally unfitted its victims for the exercise of civil rights;

and that there were, in the neighbourhood, certain salubrious springs, which had the virtue of counter-acting the tendency to disease in those who used them, the waters of which were very palatable to those who were in health, but very disagreeable to those who were infected. Let us suppose, farther, that the government, anxious for the well-being of the people, should enact a law, binding every individual to drink these waters at fixed periods, under the penalty of forfeiting all civil rights and immunities, in case of disobedience; thus adding the sanction of law to the constitution of nature. In these circumstances, it is evident that disobedience would be attended by two distinct consequences: first, by disqualification for holding any office in the state, as the legal penalty of disobedience; and, secondly, by a disease (from not using the antidote) which would, of itself, naturally unfit the subject of it from holding any office, even were he not excluded by law, and which would also oppose its own cure, by producing a strong repugnance to the only medicine which could remove it. Their natural repugnance to the waters would also be strengthened by irritation against the government under whose condemnation they lay, and by the persuasion that obedience could now be of no use, because the penalty was already incurred.

In this supposed case, we see obedience, health, and the enjoyment of civil privileges, united both by law and nature on the one side; and disobedience, civil disqualifications, and disease, as closely united on the other. We see also, that this disease can

only be removed by a return to obedience, and that this obedience can only be produced by some motive powerful enough to overcome the distaste for the remedy. As health, and the enjoyment of civil privileges, were, from the outset, inseparably connected in the mind of the government, and as the law was made simply for the purpose of giving an additional motive for using the necessary means of preserving health, so if the malady should become generally prevalent, (the original connection between health and civil privileges still subsisting, and being itself the real ground of the present disqualifications,) the views of government would become primarily directed to those means by which the people might be induced to return to the use of that remedy which could alone restore health, and fit them for the exercise of those privileges for which they had disqualified themselves both by law and nature. The reason of this is obvious, because the removal of the legal disqualifications could be of no possible use, whilst the disease continued, except in so far as it acted as a motive with the diseased outlaws for applying the remedy, both by showing them that the road to preferment was now set open, if they were only fit for it, and also by manifesting the kindly disposition of government, and thus exciting them to gratitude and obedience.

Although it is perhaps impossible to make out a perfect analogy between the things of the visible and invisible worlds, yet there appear to us to be some circumstances, in this case, which bear very much on the relation which, according to the Bible, subsists between God and man.

The rights and immunities of God's family consist in possessing the favour of God, in approaching to him at all times as our Father, in enjoying what he enjoys, in rejoicing to see his will accomplished through the wide range of his dominions, and in being ourselves made instruments in accomplishing it.

The only character which is capable of enjoying these privileges, or indeed of considering them in the light of privileges, must be one which is in some measure conformed to God's character. This then is spiritual health, which evidently can only be derived from, or maintained by a love, a predominant love to God in his true character. But as man, from the constitution of his nature, was liable to choose differently from God's choice, and thus to fall into spiritual disease, it pleased the divine wisdom to point out, in the form of an express law, the only source of spiritual health, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart;" and to sanction it by the penalty of exclusion, in case of disobedience, and the promise of divine privileges, in case of obedience. Thus we see here also, obedience, spiritual health, and heavenly immunities, united by nature, as well as by positive law, on the one side; and disobedience, spiritual disease, and forfeiture, on the other.

Man disobeyed the commandment, he loved other things better than God; and thus subjected himself to the legal penalty, and at the same time was affected with that spiritual disease which disqualified him for being a member of God's family, even supposing that there had been no legal exclusion whatever.

When the mercy of God purposed to deliver man from this state of misery into which he had precipitated himself, it became his object to bring him back to spiritual health, and thus to make him partake of heavenly happiness. But the source of health still continued the same; an intelligent being could only become like God, by loving God in his true character. It became necessary then, that some manifestation of the divine holiness and justice should be made, so interwoven with motives to gratitude, that he who believed the history of it, should be constrained to love, not only the mercy of God, but even that awful and pure sanctity which cannot look upon iniquity.

We naturally esteem, and even love perfect justice, except in those cases where its condemning sentence falls upon ourselves. At the same time, if justice is compromised, even in our own favour, our gratitude is necessarily mingled with a degree of contempt or disesteem; so that it is the union of kindness and justice, in their highest degrees, which alone can attract perfect reverential love.

Now, supposing that such a manifestation of the character of God had been made, as that his mercy had seemed to overlook sanctity, and throw it into the shade, by affixing no stigma to transgression; our love could not have been accompanied by perfect reverence, and moreover, what is principally to be attended to, this love could not have the effect of healing our spiritual disease, because, not being attracted by the full and true character of God, it could not produce in us a resemblance to that true

character, which is the main object to be accomplished. This supposition is, of course, merely made for the sake of the argument, for it is absurd to suppose that God should manifest himself otherwise than in his true character.

A manifestation of unmixed justice in the Divine character must have been still more inefficacious. It could have attracted no love, and, of course, no resemblance; it could only have confirmed the sentence of condemnation, and thus have strengthened our enmity and despair, even whilst it might have compelled our respect.

In order to produce real spiritual health, the Divine manifestation must be such, as to excite within our hearts a perfect complacency in all and each of the perfections of God; it must lead us to adopt his loves and hatreds, so to speak; it must exhibit sin to us, not only as fearful from its consequences, but as hateful in itself, and revolting to every feeling of affection and gratitude.

This manifestation of himself hath God made in the gospel of his Son. In that gospel, he makes the fullest and freest offers of pardon and favour, but it is through the blood of atonement. God became man, and dwelt amongst us: he took upon himself our nature, and the judicial sentence under which we lay, on account of transgression. He showed the evil of sin, and the power of justice, by suffering the just for the unjust. The infinity of Godhead gave weight and dignity unspeakable to the sacrifice. He showed a love unmeasured, in that, when the authority of the divine law required full satisfaction, he

hesitated not to give himself a ransom for sinners. In this wondrous work, justice magnifies mercy, and mercy magnifies justice. The greatness of the sacrifice demonstrates the extent both of the divine abhorrence for sin, and of the divine love for sinners. When we sin against this Saviour, or forget him, we must feel that it is the basest ingratitude, it is trampling on that blood that was shed for us. The gospel farther assures us, that this same God is ever present, with these same feelings towards us, with these same feelings towards sin—that he orders every event, and appoints every duty—that he offers us his listening ear, and his enabling Spirit, in all difficulties—and that he points us to a rest beyond the grave, where our resemblance to him shall be completed, and his joy shall be ours.

In this manifestation of the divine character, the attributes of justice and mercy form a combination so amiable and so resplendent, that whilst our affections and esteem are chained to it, our very conception faints under it. We can here love perfect justice, because we are not under its condemnation; we can here adore perfect mercy, because it is unmixed with weakness or partiality. Sin, even in the abstract, is associated in our minds with sentiments of abhorrence, as well as fear; and holiness, with sentiments of affection, as well as hope.

A growing resemblance to the character thus gloriously manifested, is the necessary consequence of our love for it. This is a law of our nature. The leading objects of our thoughts and affections constitute the moulds, as it were, into which our minds

are cast, and from which they derive their form and character. This fact ought to make us most watchful over the motions of our hearts; for it is only by a constant contemplation of the true character of God, and by cherishing and exercising those affections and desires which arise out of this contemplation, that the divine image is renewed in our souls. We are not to expect any mechanical or extraneous impression separate from that which the truth makes: for it is by the truth alone, known and believed, that the Holy Spirit operates in accomplishing that sanctifying work, which is itself salvation. When the soul, therefore, leaving God, chooses created things for its chief objects, these things become the moulds which impart to it their own fleeting character, and imprint on it their own superscription of vanity and death.

When this connection between loving an object and resembling it, is considered, we can have no difficulty in discerning why faith in the gospel history is required, in order to salvation. We cannot love that which we do not believe, and we cannot resemble that which we do not love. Hence it is, that faith becomes a matter of such vital consequence. It is the very foundation of the whole Christian character, the very root of the tree.

If salvation had consisted simply in the removal of the judicial penalty denounced against sin—if this had been the sole scope of the work of Christ, it would have been unnecessary to have revealed the gospel history to men, or to have required their belief of it: because the atonement being made, their

belief could neither add to it nor take from it. But when salvation is considered to express the renewed health of the soul, and when heaven and hell are considered as the names of opposite characters, necessarily connected by the very nature of things, with certain happy or miserable consequences, and thus, when the revealed law of God is considered as explaining and declaring the particulars of a constitution which was originally mixed up with the elements of our being, rather than as enacting a new one, then we see the importance of faith, because it is the only medium through which the perfections of the divine character can possibly make any impression on our minds; and unless our minds be so impressed as to excite our love, we cannot become like God, or, in other words, our spiritual health cannot be restored, nor improved. We are not called upon to believe any thing, for the mere sake of believing it, any more than we are called on to take a medicine for the mere sake of taking it; we are called on to believe the truth, on account of the healing influence that it has upon the mind, as we are called on to take a medicine on account of its influence on our bodily health.

• It follows from this, that what is called doctrinal instruction, when properly applied, is really the most practical. No one would be considered as a practical physician, who merely recommended his patients to be in good health, and painted the advantages of a good appetite, of bodily ease and vigour, whilst at the same time he did not apply the remedies which might lead to these effects. So likewise, he is not

a practical teacher of religion, who contents himself with exhorting his hearers to be in spiritual health, and to exhibit in their lives and conversations those Christian virtues which are the symptoms of spiritual health, whilst he does not anxiously and constantly, at the same time, inculcate upon them that view of the divine character in Jesus Christ, which contains in itself means of powerful operation to renew and purify the mind, and which God himself has revealed as the appointed medicine for healing the diseases of the soul, and restoring it to health and vigour. It is possible that a physician either of souls or of bodies, may be so engrossed with the beauty of his theory, that he may forget that application of it, from which it derives its sole importance; but this error is not greater than the error of those who should dream of restoring health, without the application of any means, or by such as are contrary to the obvious principles of the science which they profess.

Besides, although we can form a very accurate notion of what bodily health is, it is impossible for us to do this with regard to spiritual health, without comprehending, according to the measure of our capacities, the state and character of that Eternal Mind, who is the pattern, as he is the source of all spiritual perfection. And this view cannot be taken, without entering into, and understanding the dealings of God with men, in the mission of Jesus Christ, which is represented in the Bible as by far the most striking and important manifestation of the divine character with which the world has been favoured. So

that it is a delusion to call upon men, or direct them to acquire spiritual health, unless at the same time the nature of this health is shown to them, by delineating the purposes of the life and death of Him, in whom alone we can find the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

Neither mental nor bodily health can be gained without the use of the appropriate means. The means of bodily health are to be discovered by human experiment and science; but the means of spiritual health are contained in the gospel. Thus the mercy of God in Christ, and his holy abhorrence of sin, manifested in perfect concord with mercy, constitute the spiritual medicine; and the object and result of its application is salvation or healing.

But, although this renewal of spiritual health in man be the great object of the gospel, yet in itself it affords no ground of confidence before God; that is, it is no foundation on which we can rest our hope for pardon or acceptance with him; both because it is imperfect in itself, and because, even if it were perfect, it could not atone for past transgression. The only confidence which it is calculated to give, is analogous to that confidence which a man feels when he finds his bodily health improving by the use of a particular regimen: he is satisfied of the advantage of the system, and he perseveres in it with alacrity. The ground of our hope before God continues the same, and this ground is the sacrifice of Christ, for the sins of the world. The mercy and the justice manifested in this fact, are, and continue for ever to be, the only food which can confirm

and increase that spiritual health which they first gave. The moment that the soul begins to feed on any other food than this, the moment that it takes any thing else for its chief joy, or hope, or confidence,—that very moment the health of the soul declines, the disease of sin gathers strength, and disorders the whole frame of the soul; withdraws the affections and faculties from the pursuit of those things which are eternal, and points them to passing shadows; relaxes all the energies of the spiritual life; displaces true joy, and hope, and peace, and substitutes in their room a joy that inebriates, and a hope that dies, and a peace that blindfolds, whilst it conducts to ruin. He who withdraws from the sacrifice of Christ, and places confidence in the spiritual health to which he has already attained, is like the man who would refuse his necessary food, and dream of supporting his life out of that stock of life which he had already enjoyed.

“My beloved brethren,” says the Apostle, “be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.” This work consists in living under an ever-present sense of what God hath done for sinners, in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Faith means the conviction of the reality of things which we do not see. Now, in order that this conviction be of any use to us, it must be present with us. A man cannot be said to be under a conviction, unless it is upon his mind. If a man is convinced that particular precautions are necessary for his health, he will take these precautions: but

as soon as he forgets the necessity, his precautions vanish. Thus, forgetfulness comes often to the same thing as an opposite conviction. The belief of the morning, if it be confined to the morning, will do us no good through the day. He that *believes* is saved, not he who *has* believed. The sole object of Christian belief is to produce the Christian character, and unless this is done, nothing is done. Good bodily health has a value in itself, independently of the good digestion and good nourishment which produced it; so also spiritual health has a value in itself, independently of the correct belief which produced it. In both cases, the effects are the objects of ultimate importance, but then they cannot exist without their causes, and when the causes cease to operate, the effects must also cease. To resemble God is the great matter, but we cannot resemble him without loving him; and we cannot love him in his true character, without believing in his true character.*

In the character and writings of the REV. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, the preceding remarks are most powerfully illustrated. He constantly presents the "blood of sprinkling," as the only effectual balm for the wounded conscience; but it is, that the conscience thus pacified, might be purged "from dead works to serve the living God." He constantly

* The preceding remarks were furnished by Mr. Erskine for this edition of Mr. Rutherford's Letters; those which follow were furnished by another hand.

rests on the sacrifice of Christ, for removing the guilt and condemnation of sin; but it is that being delivered from the spirit of bondage and fear, he might serve God "in newness of spirit." He constantly looks to the perfect righteousness of Christ, as the sure ground of his acceptance with God; but he no less looks to the perfection of Christ, that, by the transforming influence of such a contemplation, he might "be changed into the same image." He constantly directs his view to the glory and blessedness of those heavenly mansions, which Christ has gone to prepare for his people; but it is that having this hope in him, he might be prepared for these blessed mansions, "by purifying himself even as Christ is pure."

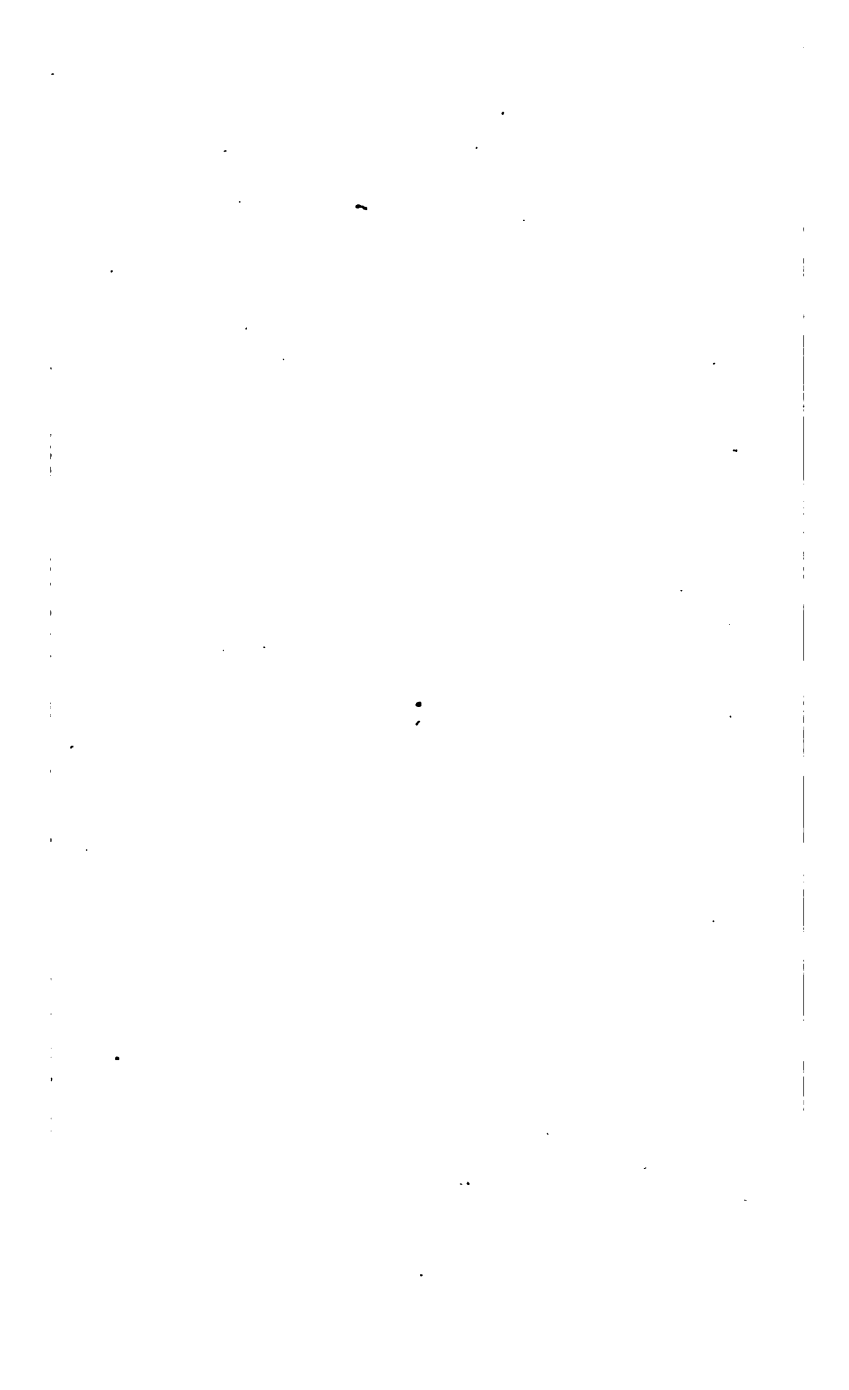
While few have cherished a more cordial and unshaken faith in the obedience and death of Christ, as the sole foundation of their hope for pardon and acceptance with God, few have more fully manifested the genuine and unfailing fruits of such a faith in the holiness and purity of their lives. Few have equalled him in their steady adherence to truth in the midst of persecution and suffering—or in greater devotion to the will of God, in every thing he considered his duty, with such a fearless disregard of consequences—or in cherishing with greater care and tenderness, a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man—or in making the work of personal sanctification more the business of their lives—or in labouring more abundantly to teach others the way of salvation, and extend the interests of pure and undefiled religion. In his life, no less than in his

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writings, he afforded a noble vindication of the doctrines of grace being doctrines according to godliness. "Holiness to the Lord," was the inscription which he endeavoured to write on every affection of his heart, and on every action of his life; and knowing this to be the indispensable preparation for heaven, in his precious, and spiritual, and edifying Letters, he constantly breathes no less after purity than peace. In obedience to the apostolic injunction, his great endeavour was to keep himself in the love of God; and it was by maintaining in his soul a rejoicing sense of this love, and of peace and reconciliation with God, that he was enabled to offer the hourly and ever-burning incense of a heart devoted in all its affections to Him, as the God of his redemption.

T. E.

EDINBURGH, *January*, 1825.



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BY THE

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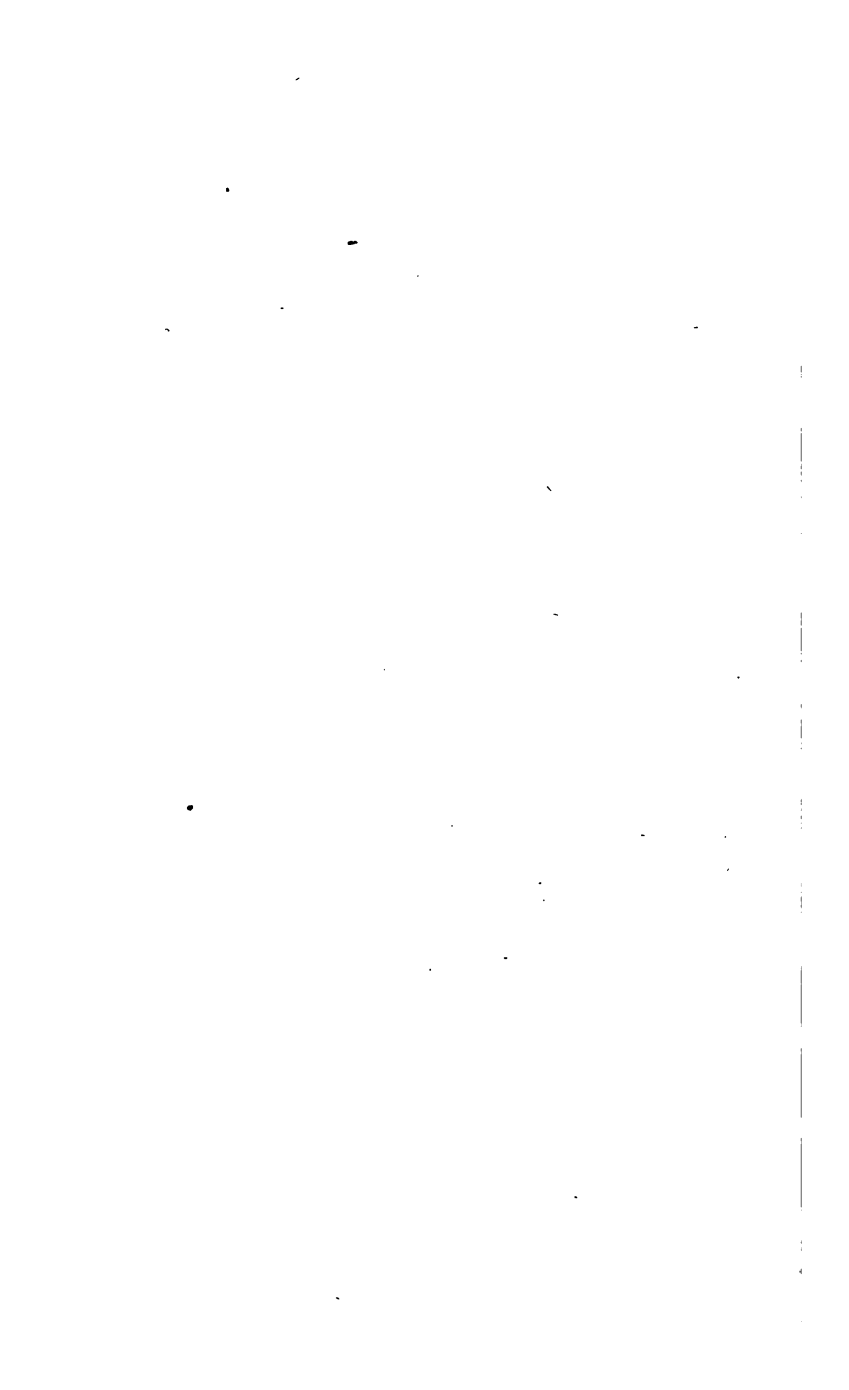
EMINENT as the name of SAMUEL RUTHERFORD has been, and dear as his memory must ever be to those who know how to value an unshrinking profession in the hour of trial and difficulty, no excuse can be necessary for this attempt to make his letters more generally known, than the experience of the Editor of this selection proved them to be, even in that country, whose church history is illustrated by the account of this good man's unswerving testimony to the "faith once delivered to the saints," at a period when many were called upon to seal such testimony with their blood. But, to those who are acquainted with, and partial to his letters in their original form, some apology may be requisite for the alterations of phraseology, and omission of many passages in those which have been selected and are now offered to the public, as exhibiting most strongly, and enforcing most persuasively, the doctrines and principles which have distinguished the pure church of Christ, and animated her members in every age;

but whose solidity and lustre are most conspicuously manifest in the hour of persecution and trial.

We are aware how strong those feelings are, which consecrate the very peculiarities of a favourite teacher, and that the language, however quaint or antiquated, in which spiritual truths were first presented to the mind, or which spoke consolation to the wounded spirit, becomes so endeared to us, that any alteration of it seems to rob the maxim of wisdom, or the word of comfort, of some portion of its strength or sweetness: yet we think that even those (the number of whom is now comparatively small) who have been nurtured by the writings of this highly spiritual man, will not deny, that their obsolete phraseology, the frequent reiteration of the same ideas, and such turns both of thought and expression, as in the present day appear extravagant, (and which, as his Biographer observes, have been "jested on by the profane wits of the age,")—are calculated to deter general readers from their perusal, and actually have rendered this "mine of spiritual wealth," as it has been aptly designated by the venerable Richard Cecil, a hidden treasure to many who would highly prize the gold, could they obtain it separated from the dross which incumbers it. The object, therefore, assiduously kept in view by the Editor of the present selection, has been to free these valuable Letters from the objections above enumerated, without depriving them of any of their characteristic vigour and vivacity; and a comparison with the originals will show, that nothing essential to the individuality of the style has been sacrificed

to a fastidious delicacy, and nothing tending to edification omitted. The necessity of conversion—the danger of delusion—the importance of “making thorough work” of that great business of our lives—the alone sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice for our justification—our acceptance with Him, and reception of “His fulness,” through faith in that sufficient sacrifice—entire dependance upon Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the Author and Finisher of our faith, in whom, spiritually as well as naturally, we “live, and move, and have our being;”—these are the points dwelt upon in the Letters, and set forth with all the power resulting from the deep experience of a strong and ardent mind. Christ *for us*, with us, *in us*, is the theme, however the expressions may be varied according to the circumstances of the writer, or of those whom he addressed. But the Letters will speak for themselves; and they will speak to each of us with a force proportionate to the anxiety we feel to make our calling and election sure, knowing that “the time is short,” and that “now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

Edinburgh, January, 1825.



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LIFE

OF

THE AUTHOR.

MR. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, a gentleman by birth, having spent some time at the grammar-school, went to the university of Edinburgh, where he was so much admired for his great talents, and one from whom great things might be expected, that in a short time, though but then very young, he was made professor of philosophy in that university.

Some time after this he was called to be minister at Anwoth, in the shire of Galloway, which charge he entered by means of the Viscount of Kenmure, without any acknowledgment or engagement to the bishops. There he laboured with great diligence and success, both night and day, rising usually by three o'clock in the morning, spending the whole time in reading, praying, writing, catechising, visiting, and other duties belonging to the ministerial profession and employment.

Here he wrote his "*Exercitationes de Gratia*," &c. for which he was summoned, in June 1630, before the High Commission Court; but the weather was so tempestuous as to obstruct the passage of

the Archbishop of St. Andrews hither, and Mr. Colvill, one of the judges, having befriended him, the diet was deserted. About the same time, his first wife died, after a sore sickness of thirteen months, and he himself being so ill of a fever for thirteen weeks, that he could not preach on the Sabbath day without great difficulty.

In April 1634, he was again threatened with another prosecution, at the instance of the Bishop of Galloway, before the High Commission Court. Accordingly he was again summoned before the High Commission Court for his non-conformity, his preaching against the Five Articles of Perth, and the fore-mentioned book "*Exercitationes Apologeticae pro Divina Gratia*," which book, they alleged, reflected upon the Church of Scotland; but the truth was, says a late historian,* the argument of that book cut the sinews of Arminianism, and galled the episcopal clergy to the very quick, and therefore Bishop Sydeserf could endure him no longer. When he came before the Commission Court, he altogether declined them as a lawful judicatory, and would not give the Chancellor (being a clergyman) and the bishops their titles, by lording of them; yet some had the courage to befriend him, particularly Lord Lorn, afterwards the famous Marquis of Argyle, who did as much for him as was in his power to do; but the Bishop of Galloway threatening, that if he got not his will of him he would write to the king, it was

* See Stevenson's History, vol. i. p. 149. Rowe's History, page 295.

carried against him; and, upon the 27th of July, 1636, he was discharged from exercising any part of his ministry within the kingdom of Scotland, under pain of rebellion; and ordered, within six months, to confine himself within the city of Aberdeen, during the king's pleasure: which sentence he obeyed, and forthwith went to the place of his confinement.

From Aberdeen he wrote many of his famous letters, from which it is evident, that the consolations of the Holy Spirit did greatly abound with him in his sufferings; yea, in one of these letters, he expresses this in the strongest terms when he says, "I never knew before, that his love was in such a measure. If he leaves me, he leaves me in pain, and sick of love, and yet my sickness is my life and health. I have a fire within me; I defy all the devils in hell, and all the prelates in Scotland, to cast water on it." Here he remained upwards of a year and a half, by which time he made the doctors of Aberdeen know that the Puritans, as they called them, were clergymen as well as they. But upon notice that the private council had received in a declination against the High Commission Court in the year 1638, he ventured to return to his flock at Anwoth, where he again took great pains, both in public and in private, amongst that people, who from all quarters resorted to his ministry, so that the whole country might account themselves as his particular flock; and, it being then at the dawning of the reformation, found no small benefit by the gospel, that part of the ancient prophecy being farther accomplished, "For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

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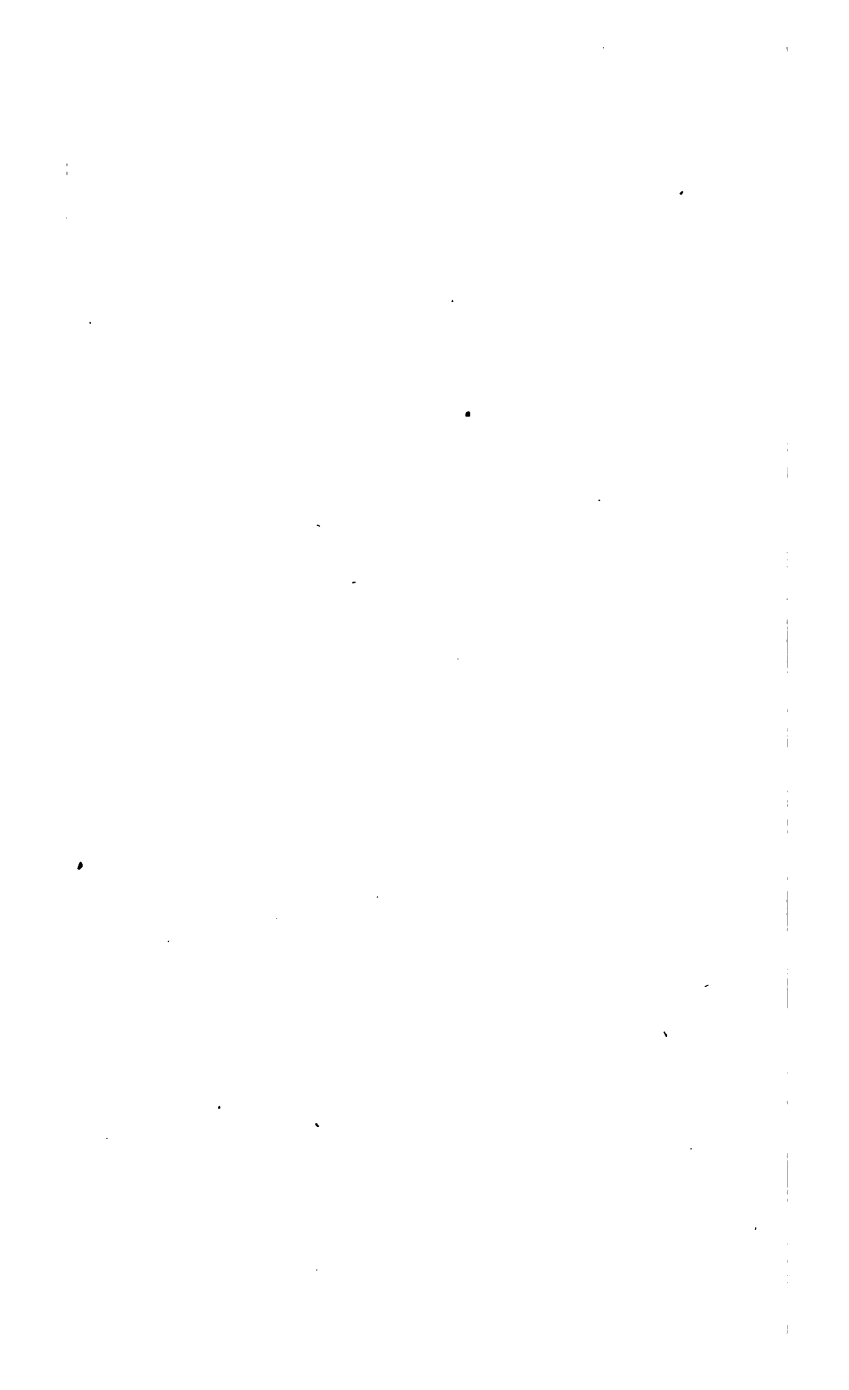
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TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IN each of these Epistles thou mayest perceive, how the Writer's heart is inflamed with a holy fire, and how his soul ascends, as if snatched up to heaven, and caught up above all that is below God. O how much drops from his pen above the ordinary attainments and experience, even of such as seem to have out-run others! So that in respect of us, this angel of the church speaks as one standing already in the choir of angels, or as an angel come down from heaven among men. And thus, leaving thee to peruse what is made public for thy edification; and to press this pomegranate, and squeeze this grape; and to drink till thou find thy soul refreshed with its spiced wine; and wishing thee an experimental knowledge of that surpassing and inconceivable sweetness which is in the fruition of God, and to be enjoyed in a fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and a full draught of these pure streams of solid joy and consolation, wherewith the soul of this saint was refreshed, and which run through these lines. He speaks as coming forth out of the king's banquet-

ing house, to persuade thee to go in thither, and feast and refresh thy soul with the same pure delights, and permanent pleasures, whereon he fed, and which flow in upon the soul, and overflow it, while the saint finds himself, with his Beloved's "left hand under his head, and his right hand embracing him." I shall only wish and beg, that thou wouldst seriously seek of God the same thing for him who seeks this for thee, and hath this design in the pains taken in publishing these Letters; if thou be thereby provoked to seek till thou find, this is that adequate recompense which he seeks, earnestly entreats, and expects, who is

Thy soul's well-wisher,

and Servant in Christ Jesus.

LETTERS.

To VISCOUNTESS KENMURE. (1.)

MADAM,

ALL dutiful obedience in the Lord remembered: I have heard of your Ladyship's infirmity and sickness with grief; yet I trust you have learned to say, "It is the Lord, let him do whatever seemeth good in his eyes." It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question, whether their will, or the will of their Creator, should be done; and since that time, froward mankind have always pleaded in that same suit with them against God, in daily repining against his will. But the Lord, being both Party and Judge, hath declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" Isa. xlv. 10. It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith, and in holy submission, to give that to God, which the law of his almighty and just power will have of us: therefore, Madam, your Lord wills you, in all states of life, to say, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;" and herein shall you have comfort, that He who sees perfectly through all your evils, and knows the frame and constitution of your nature,

and what is most healthful for your soul, administers every cup of affliction with his own gracious hand. Never believe that your tender-hearted Saviour, who knows the weakness of your constitution, will mix that cup with one drachm weight of poison; drink then with the patience of the saints, and the God of patience bless your medicine. I have heard your Ladyship complain of deadness, and want of the bestirring power of the life of God: but courage, —He who walked in the garden, and caused Adam to hear his voice, will also, at some time, come into your soul, and make you to hear a more sweet word. You are, at such a time, like Jacob mourning the supposed death of Joseph, when Joseph was living. The new creature, the image of the second Adam, is living in you; and yet you are lamenting the supposed death of the life of Christ in you. I have good confidence, Madam, that Christ Jesus, whom your soul is seeking, is within you; and yet I speak not this, to lay a pillow under your head, or to dissuade you from a holy fear of the loss of your Saviour. I know, in spiritual confidence, the devil will be apt to come in, and endeavour to bring you under a fearful sleep, till he whom your soul loveth be departed from the door, and have left off knocking; and therefore, here the Spirit of God must hold your soul in the middle line, betwixt confident resting in the arms of Christ, and drowsy presumptuous sleeping in the bed of carnal security. Therefore, worthy lady, so count little of yourself, because of your own wretchedness and sinful drowsiness, that you count not also little of God, in the course of his

unchangeable mercy; for there be many Christians, most like to young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land doth move, when the ship and they themselves are moved—just so, not a few do imagine, that God moveth and changeth place, because their giddy souls are under sail, and subject to alteration, to ebbing and flowing. But “the foundation of the Lord abideth sure;” God knoweth that you are his own. Wrestle, fight, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray, and then you have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you. You have now, Madam, a sickness before you, and after that, a death; gather then food for the journey. God give you eyes to see through sickness and death, and to see something beyond death. Now, I believe you have only these two shallow brooks, sickness and death, to pass through; and you have also a promise that Christ shall do more than meet you, even that he shall come himself; yea, and bear you in his arms. O then! O then, for the joy that is set before you, for the love of the man (who is also God over all, blessed for ever) that is standing upon the shore to welcome you, run your race with patience—the Lord go with you. Your Lord will not have you, nor any of his servants, exchange for the worse. Death in itself includeth both the death of the soul, and the death of the body. But to God’s children the bounds and limits of death are abridged and drawn into a more narrow compass—so that, when you die, death shall in part only seize upon you, or the least part of you only shall die, and that is, the dissolution of the body: for in Christ

will not give your love to any false Christ: you know not how soon your marriage-day will come; nay, is not eternity hard upon you? It were time, then, that you had your wedding-garment prepared: be not sleeping at your Lord's coming. I pray God, you may be in readiness when he knocketh. Be not discouraged to go from this country to another part of the Lord's earth; "the earth is His, and the fulness thereof." This is the Lord's lower house: while we are lodged here, we have no assurance to be ever in one chamber, but must be content to remove from one corner to another, resting in hope, that, when we come up to the Lord's upper city, Jerusalem that is above, we shall remove no more, because then we shall be at home. And, go wheresoever ye will, if your Lord go with you, ye are at home. Jesus be your shadow and your covering. I have received many and divers heavy strokes, since the Lord called me to the ministry; but indeed I esteem your departure from amongst us the weightiest; but I perceive God will have us to be deprived of whatsoever we idolize, that he may have his own place. I see exceeding small fruit of my ministry, and would be glad to know of one soul, to be my crown and rejoicing in the day of Christ. "Though I spend my strength in vain, yet my labour is with my God." I wish and pray, that the Lord would make me learn to go with my face against a storm. Again, I commend you, body and spirit, to him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Grace, grace, grace for ever be with

you. Pray; pray continually. Your Ladyship's in all dutiful obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 14, 1629.

To LADY KENMURE. (4.)

Madam,

I HAVE longed exceedingly to hear of your life, and health, and growth in the grace of God. I entreat you, Madam, let me have two lines from you, concerning your present condition. I know you are in grief and heaviness; and if it were not so, you might be afraid, because then your way would not be so like the way that our Lord saith leadeth to the New Jerusalem. Sure I am, if you knew what were before you, or if you saw some glances of it, you would, with gladness, pass through the present floods of sorrow, spreading forth your arms out of desire to be at land. If God have given you the earnest of the Spirit, as part of the payment of the principal sum, you ought to rejoice; for our Lord will not lose his earnest, neither will he go back, or repent him of his bargain. If you find, at some time, a longing to see God, joy in the assurance of that sight, (although the sight be but like the pass-over, that cometh about only once in the year,)—peace of conscience, liberty of prayer, the doors of God's treasury opened to the soul, and a dear sight of himself, saying, with a smiling countenance, "Welcome to me, afflicted soul;" this is the earnest which he giveth sometimes, and which maketh glad

the heart; and is an evidence that the bargain will hold. But to the end you may get this earnest, it were good to come often to God, both in prayer and hearing of the word. You must, I say, wait upon him, and be often communing with him, for the Christ who saveth you is a speaking Christ; the Church knoweth him by his voice, and can discern his language amongst a thousand. When the Lord cometh, he speaketh to the heart in the simplicity of the gospel. I have neither tongue nor pen to express to you the happiness of those who are in Christ; and when you have sold all that you have, and bought the field wherein this pearl is, you will think it no bad exchange; for if you be in him, all his is yours, therefore, "because he liveth, you shall live also." For the Son of God hath said, "Abide in me, and I in you." O sweet communion, when Christ and we are wholly united! "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; to behold my glory, that thou hast given me." Amen, dear Jesus, let it be according to thy word!

I wonder your heart should ever be cast down, if you believe this truth; and they are not worthy of Jesus Christ, who will not suffer forty years' trouble for him, having such glorious promises: but we fools believe those promises, as the man that read Plato's writings concerning the immortality of the soul; so long as the book was in his hand, he believed all was true, and that the soul could not die; but so soon as he laid by the book, presently he began to imagine, that the soul is but an airy smoke or vapour,

that perisheth with the expiring of the breath; so we, at starts, do assent to the sweet and precious promises; but, laying aside God's book, we begin to call all in question. It is true faith indeed to believe without a pledge, and to hold the heart constant; and when we doubt, to run "to the law and to the testimony," and stay there. Madam, hold you here; here is your Father's testament, read it: in it he hath left you remission of sins and life everlasting. If all that you have in this world be crosses and troubles, down-castings, frequent desertions and departures of the Lord, still he purposeth to do you good at your latter end, and to give you rest from the days of adversity. "It is good to bear the yoke of God in your youth." Turn ye to the strong hold, as a prisoner of hope. "For the vision is for an appointed time, but at the last it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it surely will come, it will not tarry." Hear himself saying, "Come, my people, (rejoice, he calleth you,) enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be past." Believe, then, believe and be ye saved: think it not hard, if you get not your will nor your delights in this life; God will have you to rejoice in nothing but himself. "God forbid that you should rejoice in any thing but the cross of Christ." Grace, grace be with you. The great messenger of the everlasting covenant preserve you in body and spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

TO LADY KENMURE. (5.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy and peace be multiplied upon you. I received your letter, in which I perceive your case in this world savoureth of communion with the Son of God in his sufferings. Ye cannot, ye must not have a more pleasant or more easy condition here, than he had, who through affliction was made perfect. We indeed argue, Cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but he can? but his infinite wisdom decreeth the contrary; and though we cannot see the reason, yet he hath a most just reason. Madam, when you are come to the other side of the water, have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters, and your wearisome journey, and shall see nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, in the clear glass of endless glory; you shall then be forced to say, if God had done otherwise with me than he hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory. It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on. I protest, in the presence of that all-discerning eye, who knoweth what I write, and what I think, that I would not be without the sweet experience of the consolations of God, for all the bitterness of affliction: nay, whether God come to his children with a rod, or with a crown, if he come himself with it, it is well: welcome, welcome, Jesus, what way soever thou come, if we get a sight of thee. And sure I

am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside, and say, "Courage, I am thy salvation," than to enjoy health, and never be visited by God.

Worthy and dear lady, in the strength of Christ fight and overcome; you are now alone, but you may have (if you ask,) Three always in your company, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I trust they are near you. You are now deprived of a lively ministry, so was Israel in their captivity; yet hear God's promise to them, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary, in the countries where they shall come:" behold a sanctuary! for a sanctuary God himself, in the place and room of the temple of Jerusalem. I trust in God, carrying this temple about with you, you shall see Jehovah's beauty in his house.

Madam, my wife, after a long disease and torment, by the space of a year and a month, is departed this life: the Lord hath done it, blessed be his name. I have been diseased of a fever for the space of thirteen weeks, and am still in that sickness, so that I preach but once on the Sabbath with great difficulty. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

S. R.

Anwoth, June 26, 1630.

To LADY KENMURE. (6.)

Madam,

I AM exceedingly grieved that you should think, or have cause to think, that such as love you in God, in this country, are forgetful of you: for myself, Madam, I owe to your Ladyship all evidences of my high respect (in the sight of my Lord, whose truth I preach, I am bold to say it) for his rich grace in you. Madam, I have no new purpose to write unto you, but of that which I think, nay, which our Lord thinketh needful—that one thing, even Mary's good part, which you have chosen. All that God hath, both himself and his creatures, he is dealing and parting among the sons of Adam; there are none so poor, as that they can say, he has given them nothing; but there is no small difference betwixt the gifts given to his own children, and to the children of the world. I hope your Ladyship labour-eth to get assurance of the surest patrimony, even God himself. You will find in Christianity, that God aimeth, in all his dealings with his children, to bring them to a high contempt of, and deadly feud with this world; and to set a high price upon Christ, and to esteem him one that cannot be bought for gold, and well worthy the striving for; and for no other cause doth the Lord withdraw from you the childish toys and earthly delights that he giveth unto others, but that he may have you wholly to himself: he seeketh his answer of you in affliction, to see, if even then you will give him this answer,

So I take him. Madam, give it him presently, and do not secretly grudge or murmur. If I hit not upon the right string, it is because I am not acquainted with your Ladyship's present condition; but I believe you go on foot laughing, and putting on a good countenance before the world, and yet you carry heaviness about with you. You do well not to make them witnesses of your grief, who cannot be curers of it; but as there be some worldly friends, of whom you will not entertain an ill thought; far more ought you to believe good evermore of your dear friend, Jesus Christ. The thorn is one of the most cursed and crabbed weeds that the earth yieldeth; and yet out of it springeth the rose, the sweetest of flowers, and the most delightful to the eye, that the earth hath: your Lord shall make joy and gladness out of your afflictions; for all his roses have a fragrant smell, and wait for the time when his own hand shall present them unto you. If you would have present comfort under the cross, be much in prayer; for your grief taketh liberty to work upon your mind, when you are not busied in the meditation of the ever-delighting and all-blessed Godhead.—If you would lay the price you give (which is but some few years of pain and trouble) beside the commodities you are to receive, you would see they are not worthy to be laid in the balance together; but it is nature which maketh you look what you give, and weakness of faith which hindereth you from seeing what you shall receive. Amend your hope, and trust your faithful Lord a while; he maketh himself your debtor in the new covenant; take his word.

“ Afflictions shall not spring up the second time.”
 “ He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” Of the *all things*, then, which you are without in this world, Madam, I am able to say nothing, if that be not believed. “ The overcomer shall be clothed in white raiment,” &c. “ To the overcomer I will give to sit with me in my throne, as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.” O thrice fools are we, who, like new born princes, weeping in the cradle, know not that there is a kingdom before them! then let our Lord’s own hand strike off the knots of pride, self-love, and world-worship, and infidelity, that he may make us stones and pillars in his Father’s house. The Lord give you wisdom to believe and hope your day is coming. I hope to be witness of your joy, as I have been a hearer and beholder of your grief. Think you much to follow the heir of the crown, who had experience of sorrows, and was acquainted with grief? Now commending you to the grace and mercy of God, I rest your obedient,


S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 4, 1632.

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 To LADY KENMURE. (7.)

Madam,

I WOULD not omit the present opportunity of remembering your Ladyship, still harping upon that string, which, in our whole lifetime, is never too often touched upon; nor is our lesson well enough learned, (*viz.*) that there is a necessity of advancing



in the way to the kingdom of God, by contempt of the world, denying ourselves, and bearing our Lord's cross, which is no less needful for us, than our daily food. And among many marks that we are on this journey, and under sail towards heaven, this is one, when the love of God so fills our hearts, that we forget to love and care too much for the having or wanting other things; for this cause God's children take well with "the spoiling of their goods," knowing in themselves that they have in heaven "a better and an enduring substance." "That day, that the earth and the works therein shall be burned with fire," your hidden hope, and your hidden life, shall appear: and therefore, since you are not now many years from your endless eternity, and know not how soon the sky above your head shall open, and the Son of man be seen "in the clouds of heaven," what better and wiser course can you take, than to leave off loving, desiring, or grieving, for the wants that shall be made up when your Lord and you meet. *Then* shall ye rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory—and your joy shall no one take from you." It is enough that the Lord hath *promised* you great things; only let the time of bestowing them be his own. It is not for us to set an hour-glass to the Creator of time. *It will be*, for God hath said it: wait his harvest; his day is better than your day; he putteth not his sickle in the corn, till it be ripe and full-eared: and the great Angel of the Covenant bear you company, till the trumpet shall sound, and the voice of the archangel awaken the dead.

You will find it your only happiness, under what-

ever thing disturbeth and crosseth the peace of your mind in this world, to love nothing for itself, but only God for himself. Our love to him should begin on earth, as it shall be in heaven: for the bride taketh not, by a thousand degrees, so much delight in her wedding-garment, as in the bridegroom; so we, in the world to come, (although clothed with glory as with a robe,) shall not be so affected with glory that goeth about us, as with the Bridegroom's joyful face and presence. Madam, if you can attain to this, the field is won; and your mind, for any thing your Lord can take from you, will soon be calmed and quieted. It is well to lend to God willingly, who otherwise both *will* and *may* take from you against your will.

Madam, fearing to be tedious to you, I break off here, commending you, your person, ways, burdens, and all that concerns you, to that Almighty, who is able to bear you and your burdens.

Grace be with you for ever.

S. R.

Anwoth, Jan. 14, 1632.

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To LADY KENMURE. (8.)

Madam,

I BLESS our Lord, through Christ, who hath brought you home again to your country, from that place where you have seen with your eyes, that which our Lord's truth taught you before, (to wit,) that worldly glory is nothing but a vapour, a shadow, the foam of the water, or something less and lighter—

even nothing; and that our Lord hath not, without cause, said in his word, (1 Cor. vii. 31.) "the fashion of this world passeth away:" in which place our Lord compareth it to an image in a looking-glass. Some see in it the picture of honour—and but a picture indeed; for true honour is to be great in the sight of God: and others see in it the shadow of riches—and but a shadow indeed; for durable riches stand, as one of the maids of Wisdom, "upon her left hand:" and a third sort see in it the face of painted pleasure, and the beholders will not believe but the image they see in this glass is a living man, till the Lord come and break the glass in pieces, and remove the face; and then, like Pharaoh awakened, they say, "Behold it was a dream." I know your Ladyship thinketh yourself little in the way of this world, for the favourable aspect of any of these three painted faces; and blessed be God that it is so—the better for you. If you be not changed, as I hope you are not, I believe you esteem yourself to be of those, whom God hath tried these many years, and refined as silver. But, Madam, I will show your Ladyship a privilege that others want, and you have, in this case: such as are in prosperity, and are filled with earthly joys, and increased with children and friends; though the word of God is indeed written for their instruction; yet to you who are in trouble, from whom the Lord hath taken many children, and whom he hath otherwise exercised, there are some chapters, some particular promises in the word of God, made in a special manner, which would never have been yours so as they now are, if

you had had your portion in the world like others; therefore, all the comforts, promises, and mercies, God offereth to the afflicted, are so many tokens of love to you; take them to you, Madam, and claim your right, and be not robbed. It is no small comfort, that God hath written some Scriptures to you, which he hath not to others; you seem rather in this to be envied than pitied, for you are indeed like people of another world, and those that are above the ordinary rank of mankind, whom our Lord and King hath named beside all the rest; and to whom he hath written comforts and his hearty commendations. Read these, and the like, and think God is like a friend, who sendeth a letter to a whole house and family, but who speaketh in his letter to some by name, that are dearest to him in the house. You are then, Madam, among the dearest friends of our Lord; and if it were lawful, I would envy you, that God should so honour you above many of his dear children. Therefore your part is, in this case, (seeing God taketh nothing from you but what He is to supply with his own presence) to beseech your Lord to take his own place in the room of your dead children. Go forward, honourable and elect Lady, in the strength of your Lord, with your face toward Him who longeth more for a sight of you, than you can do for Him. I hope to see you laugh as cheerfully after noon, as you have mourned before noon. The hand of the Lord be with you in your journey. What have you to do here; "this is not your rest; arise then, set your foot upon the mountain; go up out of the wilderness leaning upon your Beloved."

If you knew the welcome that abideth you, when you come home, you would hasten your pace; for your own Lord's tender hand shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and then you shall have joy of heart. Madam, paper willeth me to end before affection: I leave your Ladyship, praying more earnestly for grace and mercy to be with you, and multiplied upon you, here and hereafter, than my tongue can express. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Kirkcudbright.

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*To LADY KENMURE. (9.)*

Madam,

I LONG to see your Ladyship, and to hear how it goeth with you; I do remember you and your necessities to Him who is able to keep you, and present you blameless before his face with joy. And, Madam, if you love him, you will "love his commandments," and this is not one of the least, to bear cheerfully and willingly the yoke of Jesus Christ; for I trust your Ladyship did first contract and bargain to follow Him upon these terms, that by his grace you should "endure hardships, and suffer affliction as the soldier of Christ." I persuade myself your sufferings are but like your Saviour's (yea, incomparably less and lighter) which are called but "a bruising of his heel," a wound far from the heart; "your life is hid with Christ in God," and therefore you cannot be robbed of it; and happy are

of this town are dry and cold, and it is counted no wisdom here to countenance a confined and silenced minister. But the shame of Christ's cross shall not be my shame. I find my love often jealous of Christ's love, when I look upon my own guiltiness: and I verily think, the world has too soft an opinion of the way to heaven, and that many shall find they have been but in a sad delusion; for there is more to do, than a cold and frozen, "Lord, Lord." It must be a way narrower and straiter than we conceive, for the righteous shall scarcely be saved. It were good to take a more judicious view of Christianity; for I have been doubting whether I ever knew any more of Christianity, than the letters of the name. Yet, I will not deny my Lord. I find often much joy, and unspeakable comfort in his presence, who sent me hither. I should be sometimes too joyful, if the heart-breaking remembrance of sin did not come in to sour my joys. O how sweet is the love of Christ! and how wise is that love! But let Faith wait and trust awhile. God's heirs live upon hope. Madam, your Ladyship knoweth what Christ hath done to have all your love, and that he alloweth not his love upon your dear child. Now, the only wise God, and your only One, He who dwelt in the bush, be with you. I write many kisses, and many blessings in Christ, to your dear child. The blessings of his father's God, the blessings purchased for the fatherless and the widow, be yours and his.

Your Ladyship's in the Lord Jesus,  
Aberdeen.

S. R.



## To LADY KENMURE. (19.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I cannot forget your Ladyship, and that sweet child. I desire to hear what the Lord is doing to you and him—to write to me were charity. I cannot but write to my friends, that Christ hath met me in Aberdeen; and my adversaries have sent me here, to be feasted with his love. Madam, why should I conceal Christ's love? I dare not conceal what he hath done for my soul. Madam, rue not of your having chosen the better part. Upon my salvation, this is Christ's truth I now suffer for. If I found but cold comfort in my sufferings, I would not beguile others; I would speak plainly. But this love is a mystery to the world. I would not have believed that there was so much in Christ as there is. "Come and see," maketh Christ to be known in his excellency and glory. It is little to see him in a book. Men talk of Christ by the book and tongue, and no more; but to come nigh Christ is another thing. Madam, I write to you, for your encouragement in that honourable profession Christ hath honoured you with. You have gotten the best of Christ's good things: he hath given you a Benjamin's portion. And howbeit you get strokes from your Lord, yet believe his love more than your own feeling; for this world can take nothing from you that is truly yours, and death can do you no wrong. Your Rock doth not ebb and flow, though your sea doth. That.

which Christ hath said he will abide by. Blessed be your guide, when your Head shall appear. Your day shall then dawn, and it shall never have an afternoon, nor an evening shadow. Let your child be Christ's; let him stay beside you, as the Lord's pledge, that you will willingly render back again if God will. Let me hear from your Ladyship, and your dear child. Remember my obliged obedience to my good Lady Marr. Grace, grace be with you. I write and pray blessings to your sweet child.

Yours, in all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Nov. 22, 1636.

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To LADY KENMURE. (20.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your Ladyship's letter: it refreshed me in my heaviness. The blessings and prayers of a prisoner of Christ come upon you. Since my coming here I received not a line from Galloway, except what my brother Earlstoun and his son did write. I cannot get my papers transported: but Madam, I want not the kindness of One, who, if he had never done more for me since I was born, hath engaged my heart, and gained my blessing, in this house of my pilgrimage. I would not exchange my cross with any. I am persuaded, that it is Christ's truth I now suffer for. I know his comforts are no dreams: he would not put his seal upon blank paper, nor deceive his afflicted ones, that trust in him. Your Ladyship wrote to

me that you are yet a poor scholar. Madam, you must go in at heaven's gates, your book in your hand, still learning. You have had your own large share of troubles, and a double portion; but remember that word, Heb. xii. 28. Madam, it is not long since I did write to you, that Christ is keeping mercy for you; and I abide by it still, and now I write it under my hand—Love him dearly; strive to get nearer to him. There is in him that which you never saw; he is ever nigh; he is a tree of life, green and blossoming, both summer and winter. There is a point in Christianity to which whosoever cometh will see and feel more than others can do;—I invite you anew to come to him. “Come and see,” will speak better things of him than I can do. Come nearer will say much. God never thought this world a portion worthy of you: he will not give you Esau's portion, but reserves the inheritance of Jacob for you. I long to hear of the child: I write the blessings of Christ's prisoner, and the mercies of God to him. Let him be Christ's and yours betwixt you; but let Christ be the lender, and you the borrower—not an owner. Now the blessing of our dearest Lord Jesus, and the blessing of him that is separate from his brethren, come upon you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

To LADY KENMURE. (21.)

Madam,

NOTWITHSTANDING the great haste of the bearer, I would bless your Ladyship on paper, desiring that since Christ hath ever envied that the world should have your love, that you give yourself out for Christ, and that you may be for no other—I know none worthy of you but Christ. I write my blessing to that sweet child, that you have borrowed from God; he is no heritage to you, but a loan—love him as folks do borrowed things. My heart is heavy for you. If my Lord would be pleased, I would desire some were dealt with for my return to Anwoth. But, if that never be, I thank God, Anwoth is not heaven; preaching is not Christ. I hope to wait on. Let me hear how the child is, and your Ladyship's mind and hopes of him; for it would ease my heart to know that he is well. Grace for evermore be with your Ladyship.

Yours, in all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 13, 1637.

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To LADY KENMURE. (22.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace to you. I am refreshed with your letters: the right hand of Him, to whom belong the issues from death, hath been gracious to that sweet child. I do not, I cannot forget him

and your Ladyship, in my prayers. Madam, for your own case, I love careful, and withal, *doing* complaints of want of practice; because I observe many who think it holiness enough to complain, and set themselves at nothing, as if to say, "I am sick," would cure them; they think complaints a good charm for guiltiness. I hope you are wrestling and struggling. I urge upon you, Madam, a nearer communion with Christ, and a growing communion. There are depths of love in Christ, beyond what we have seen; therefore dig deep, and labour, and take pains for him; and set by so much time in the day for him as you can—he will be won with labour. Now, Madam, I assure you, the greatest part but play with Christianity; they put it aside easily. I thought it had been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek God had been at the next door; but O, the windings and turnings that he hath led me through! and I see yet much way to the ford. He speaks with my reins in the night season, and in the morning, when I awake, I find his arrows that he shot at me sticking in my heart. Who will help me to praise? who will raise the song with me, and set on high his great love! As for friends, I shall not think the world to be the world, if that well go not dry. I trust in God to use the world, as a prudent master doth a knavish servant, (at least, God give me grace to do so!) he giveth him no charge or credit; only intrusteth him with common errands, wherein he cannot play the knave. I pray God I may not look to the world for my joys, and comforts, and confidence—that were to put Christ out of his

office. Now, the presence of the great Angel of the covenant be with you and that sweet child.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 7, 1637.

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To LADY KENMURE. (23.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyship. I long to hear from you, and that dear child; and for that cause I trouble you with letters. I am, for the present, thinking the sparrows and swallows that build their nests at Anwoth blessed birds. The Lord hath made all my congregation desolate. Alas! I am oft at this, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." I know it is my faithless jealousy, in this my dark night, to take a friend for a foe; yet hath not my Lord made a plea with me. I chide with him, but he gives me fair words. Seeing my sins, and the sins of my youth, deserved strokes, how am I obliged to my Lord, who, amongst many crosses, has given me a chosen cross; namely, to suffer for the name of the Lord Jesus. Since I must have chains, he would put golden chains on me; watered over with many consolations. Seeing I must have sorrow, (for I have sinned, O Preserver of mankind!) he hath chosen for me joyful sorrow—spiritual glorious sorrow. My crosses come through mercy, and the hand of love, from the kind heart of a brother, Christ my Lord; and therefore they are sweet. It would be thought I should

be thankful and rejoice; but my beholders, and lovers in Christ, have eyes of flesh, and made my one to be ten, and I am somebody in their books. But my Witness is above, and there are armies of thoughts within me, saying the contrary, and laughing at their wide mistake. If my inmost heart were seen, I should lose and forfeit the love and respect of all those that love God: pity would come in the place of these. I would that they would set me lower, and my well-beloved Christ higher. I would that I had grace and strength of my Lord to be joyful, and contentedly glad that God might be glorified through my sufferings, in the view of all his creatures—providing always I felt not the Lord's hatred and displeasure. If I might be the means of glorifying Christ, by whatever extremity of wretchedness, how would my soul rejoice! But I am far, far from this. His love has made me a prisoner, and bound me hand and foot; and it is my pain that I cannot get loose, nor get a free heart to do service to my Lord Jesus, and to speak his love. I confess I have neither tongue nor pen to do it. Christ's love is more than my praises, and above the thoughts of all the mighty hosts that stand before the throne of God. Woe, woe is me! for my guiltiness seen to few; my hidden wounds, still bleeding within me, are before the eyes of no man. But if my kind Lord were not still bathing, washing, balming, healing, and binding them up, they would break out to my shame. I know not what will be the end of my suffering. I have but seen the one side of my cross; what will be the other side he knoweth who

lays it on me. I thank my Lord, it is my joy to hold my peace, and wait to see what more Christ will do to me. Yet it is easy for a poor soul, in the deep depth of Christ's love, to feed upon broad wishes that Christ may be honoured; but in performance, I am stark nought. I have nothing, nothing to give Christ but poverty. Madam, I would be glad to hear that Christ's claim to you were still the more, and that you were still going forward, and that you were nearer to him. I do little honour to Christ myself, but I wish all others to make sail for Christ's haven. I am somewhat encouraged, that your Ladyship is not dry and cold to Christ's prisoner, as some are. I hope it is had in my Lord's remembrance. I am not much grieved that my jealous Master break in pieces my idols, so that they either dare not, or cannot do any thing for me. My Master needeth not their help; but he thus maketh them serviceable to his purpose. Madam, I have been so bold as to request for you, and that sweet child, the prayers of some in this country, who truly love Christ. Be pleased to let me hear how the child is. The blessings that came upon the head of Joseph, and on the head of him who was separated from his brethren, and the good-will of Him who dwelt in the bush, be seen upon him and you. Madam, I can now, by some little experience, say more of Christ to you than formerly. I must persist in this, that if you seek, there is a hidden treasure, and a golden mine in Christ, you never yet saw. Then, Come and see.



Thus, recommending you to God's dearest mercy,  
I rest your own in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 17, 1637.

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TO LADY KENMURE. (24.)

Madam,

UPON the offered opportunity of this worthy bearer, I cannot omit to answer the heads of your letter. 1st, I think not much to set down on paper, some good things concerning Christ, and to feed my soul with bare wishes, to be one with Christ—for a wish is but broken and half love; but verily to obey this, "Come and see," is a hard matter. But O! I have rather smoke than fire, and guessings rather than real assurances of him. I cannot believe without a pledge; I cannot take God's word without a security: but this is my way; for his way is, "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

2d, You write that I am filled with knowledge, and stand not in need of these warnings;—but my light, alas! is but dim. Light, and the saving use of light are far different. O, what need have I to have the ashes blown away from my dying-out fire! I may be a book-man, and be but a fool in Christ's way: learning will not beguile Christ. The Bible beguiled the Pharisees, and so may I be misled: therefore, as night-watchers hold one another waking, by speaking to one another, so we have great need to hold one another awake. Sleep stealeth

away the light of watching, even the light that reprovet sleeping. I doubt not that more would reach heaven, if they believed not heaven to be at the next door. The world's negative holiness—no adulterer, no murderer, no thief, no cozeners—makes men believe they are already glorified saints. But the sixth chapter to the Hebrews may affright us all, when we hear, that men may take of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and a taste of the powers of the life to come, to hell with them. Here is reprobate silver, which yet seems to have the king's image and superscription on it.

3d, I find you complaining of yourself; and it becomes a sinner so to do. I am not against you in that. Sense of death is of kin to life: the more sense, the more life; the more sense of sin, the less actual sin. I would prefer the pain of my wounds, however it may bereave me of my night's sleep, to my wounds without pain.

4th, Be not afraid for little grace; Christ soweth his living seed, and he will not lose his seed. If he have the guiding of our stock and state, it shall not miscarry. Our miscarriages, losses, deadness, coldness, wretchedness, are the ground which the good Husbandman laboureth.

5th, You write that his compassions fail not, notwithstanding that your service to Christ miscarrieth;—to which I answer, God forbid that there were buying, and selling, and bartering between Christ and us; for then grace would not be free. But we go to heaven with light shoulders; and the vessels, great and small, that we have, are fastened upon the

sure nail. The only danger is, that we turn God's grace into wantonness.

6th, You write, few see your guiltiness; and you cannot be free with many as with me. I answer, Blessed be God, Christ and we are not heard before men's courts: it is at home, betwixt him and us, that our differences are decided. Grace be with you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

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*To* LADY KENMURE. (25.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to your Ladyship. I long to hear from you. I know you are not looking after the things of time: you have no great cause to think, that your stock and principal is under the roof of these visible heavens; and I hope you would think yourself a deceived soul, if it were so. I would be sorry to counsel your Ladyship to make a covenant with time and this life; but rather desire you to hold in fair generals, and far off from the ill-founded haven that is on this side of the water. It speaks something when our Lord bloweth the bloom off our vain hopes in this life, and loppeth the branches of our worldly joys, well nigh the root, on purpose that they should not thrive. A forfeiture of the saint's part of worldly happiness is not such a real evil as our blinded eyes conceive.

I am growing impatient now for some deliverance, more than before; but I know I am in error. It is

possible I am not come to that measure of trial, that the Lord is seeking in his work. If my friends could do any thing effectually for my deliverance, I should exceedingly rejoice; but I know not but the Lord hath a way, whereof he will be the only reaper of praises. Let me know, by the bearer, how the child is. The Lord be his Father, and Guardian, and your Comforter. Grace, grace be with your Ladyship. Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 13, 1637.

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To LADY KENMURE. (26.)

Madam,

I WOULD not omit to write a line with this Christian bearer, one in your Ladyship's own case, driven near to Christ, in and by her affliction. I wish Christ were more dear and desirable to many souls than he is. I know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace, and hard trials together—and one of these cannot well be without the other. O that time would post faster, and hasten our communion with that "fairest among the sons of men!" but a few years will do our turn, and the soldier's hour-glass will soon run out. Madam, look to your lamp, and look for your Lord's coming, and let your heart dwell aloof from that sweet child. Christ's jealousy will not admit two equal loves in your heart; he must have one, and that the greatest. I would wish you well—and my obligations, these many years past, speak no less to me; but more I

can neither wish, nor pray, nor desire for your Ladyship, than Christ—singled and chosen out from all created good things—even though wearing a crown of thorns. I am sure the saints, at their best, are but strangers to the weight and worth of the incomparable excellence of Christ. He is so new, so fresh in excellency; day by day renewed, to those that search more and more in him; and yet he is ever one and the same. O! we know not the half of what we love, when we love Christ. Let me hear how the child is, every way; the prayers of a prisoner of Christ be upon him. Grace for evermore, even until glory perfect it, be with your Ladyship. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To LADY KENMURE. (27.)*

Madam,

IT is but too likely the Lord's controversy with these two nations is but yet beginning, and that we are ripened and white for the Lord's sickle. For the particular condition your Ladyship is in, another might speak (if they would say all) of more sad things. If there were not a fountain of free grace to water dry ground, and an uncreated wind to breathe on withered and dry bones, we were gone. All I have to do is to desire to believe, that Christ will show all good-will to save; and as for your Ladyship, I know that Christ carrieth on no design against you, but seeketh to save and redeem you. He lieth

not in wait for your falls, except it be to take you up: nothing of you, Madam, nay not your leaf can wither—truly it is a glorious life to follow the Lamb. But when you see him in his own country, at home, you will think you never saw him before. “He shall be admired of all them that believe.” You may judge how far all your now sad days, and tossings, changes, losses, wants, conflicts shall then be below you. You look to the cross now; it is above your head, and seems to threaten death, as having dominion; but it shall then be so far below your thoughts, or your thoughts so far above it, that you shall have no leisure to lend a single thought to crosses of old date, in youth, in age, in this country, or in that, from this instrument, or from another, except it be to the heightening of your consolation, in being now above, and beyond all these. Old age, and “waxing old, as doth a garment,” is written on the fairest face of the creation. Death, from Adam to the second Adam’s appearance, playeth the king, and reigneth over all. The prime heir died; his children, which the Lord hath given him, follow him; and, to speak freely of this life, did we not look for a better, there were not much gain in godliness. But there is a rest for the people of God. Grace be with you.

Your Ladyship’s in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

London, Feb. 16, 1640.

## TO LADY KENMURE. (28.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I know that you think of your departure, and that your abode in this life is short; for "we flee away as a shadow." The declining of the sun, and the lengthening of the shadow saith, our journey is short and near the end. I speak it because I have warnings of my removal. Madam, I know not any thing comparable to a nearness and spiritual communion with the Father, and the Son, Christ; there is much deadness and witheredness upon many spirits, even sometimes when near to God. You have, Madam, in your accounts, mercies, deliverances, rods, warnings, plenty of means, consolations when refuge failed; when you looked on the right hand, and behold no man would know you, nor care for your soul; when young and weak, manifestations of God, the out-goings of the Lord for you, experiences, answers from the Lord—by all which, you may be comforted now, and confirmed in the certain hope, that grace, free grace, in a fixed and established surety, shall perfect that good work in you. Happy they who see not and yet believe. Grace, grace eternally, in our Lord Jesus, be with you.

S. R.

Edinburgh, May 27, 1645.

## To LADY KENMURE. (29.)

Madam,

I HAVE heard of your infirmities of body and sickness. I know the issue shall be mercy to you, and that God's purpose, though it be hidden from you, is to commend the sweetness of his love and care for you, from your youth. And if all the sad losses, trials, sicknesses, infirmities, griefs, heaviness, and inconstancy of the creature, be expounded to be (as sure I am they are) the rods of the jealousy of a Husband in heaven, contending with all your lovers on earth, though there were millions of them, for your love, to fetch it home to heaven, single, unmixed; you will forgive (if we may use that word) every rod of God, and not let the sun go down on your wrath, against any messenger of your afflicting and correcting Father. Since you cannot but see, that the mark at which Christ hath aimed, these twenty-four years and more, is to have the company and fellowship of such a sinful creature in heaven with him, to all eternity, and because he will not (such is the extent of his love!) enjoy his Father's glory, and that crown due to him by eternal generation, without you. Therefore, Madam, believe no evil of Christ; listen to no hard reports that his rods make of him to you. He hath loved you, and washed you from your sins, and what would you have more? Is that too little? Must he remove all crosses also? I hope you can desire no more, no greater, nor more excellent suit than Christ, and



the fellowship of the Lamb for evermore. And if that desire be answered in heaven, (as I am sure it is, and you cannot deny that it is made sure to you,) the want of these poor accidents, of a living husband, of many children, of a healthful body, of a life of ease in the world, are nobly made up, and may be comfortably borne. Grace, grace be with your Ladyship.

S. R.

London, Oct. 16, 1645.

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To LADY KENMURE. (30.)

Madam,

WE but dwell here, because we can do no better: it is need, not virtue, makes us sojourners in a prison; to weep and sigh, and alas! to sin, sixty or seventy years, in a land of tears. The fruits that grow here are all tainted and infected with sin. O! how sweet it is, that the company of the first-born should be divided into two great bodies of an army, and some in their country, and some in the way to their country. If it were no more but to see once the face of the Prince of this good land, and to dwell for eternity within the rays and beams of matchless glory, and near that incomparable fountain-head of love, it were a well-spent journey, though seven deathslay between. Only let us not grow weary; the miles to that land are fewer and shorter than when we first believed. Travellers are not wise to quarrel with their host, and complain of their lodging: it is a rough way but a fair home. O that I had but such grapes and clus-

ters out of the land, as I have sometimes seen and tasted in the place of which your Ladyship makes mention! but the hope of it, in the end, is a cheerful convoy in the way. If I see little more of the prize till the race be ended, I dare not quarrel. It is the Lord! Grace be with you.

Your Ladyship's in Jesus Christ,

S. R.

London, Jan. 26, 1646.

To LADY KENMURE. (31.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you. I know that you are near many comforters, and that the promised Comforter is near at hand also; yet because I found your Ladyship a comforter to myself in my sad days, that are not yet over my head, it is my part, and more in many respects, (howbeit I can do little, God knoweth, in that kind) to speak to you in your wilderness-lot. I know, dear and noble lady, this loss of your dear child came upon you one piece and part of it after another; and that you were looking for it, and that now the Almighty hath brought on you that which you feared; and that your Lord gave you lawful warning; and I hope for his sake who prepared this cup in heaven, you will gladly drink, and salute and welcome the cross. I am sure it is not your Lord's mind to feed you with judgment and wormwood, and to give you waters of gall to drink. I know that your cup is sweetened with mercy; and that the withering of the bloom,

the flower, even the white and red of worldly joys, is for no other end, but to secure the reversion of your heart and love. Madam, subscribe to the Almighty's will: put your hand to the pen, and let the cross of your Lord Jesus have your submissive and resolute amen. If you ask and try whose this cross is, I dare say it is not all your own; the best half of it is Christ's. It sprang not out of the dust. Christ and you share this suffering; and is not this the language of the word of God—"the fellowship of Christ's sufferings;" and "the remnant of the afflictions of Christ;" and "the reproach of Christ." Christ, when he joined you to himself, took you and all the crosses and woe-hearts that follow you; and the word maketh no exception—"in all their afflictions, *he* was afflicted;" then Christ bore the first stroke of this cross, and I shall believe, for my part, he designs to distil heaven out of this loss, and all others like it; for wisdom devised it, and love laid it on, and Christ owns it as his own—take it with joy as a visitation of God; and spend the rest of your appointed time, till your change come, in the work of believing; and let faith, which never yet deceived you, speak for God's part of it. It may be, you think not many of the children of God in such a hard case as yourself; but there are some who would gladly exchange afflictions with you—yet I know yours must be your own alone, and Christ's together. I confess it seemed strange to me, that your Lord should have done that which seems to wither the very root of your worldly comforts; but we see not to the ground of the Almighty's sovereignty. "He

goeth by on our right hand, and on our left hand, and we see him not:" we see but pieces of the broken links of the chains of his providence. O let the Former work his own clay, in what frame he pleaseth! "Shall any teach the Almighty knowledge?" If he pursue dry stubble, who dare say, what dost thou? Do not wonder to see the Judge of the world weave, in one web, your mercies and the judgments of the house of Kenmure. But my weak advice, with reverence and correction, were for you, dear and worthy lady, to see how far mortification goeth on, and what dross the Lord's fire casteth out of you. I do not say heavier afflictions are a proof of heavier guiltiness—a cross is often but a false prophet in this kind—but I am sure our Lord would have the base metal in you removed; lest the Lord say, "The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed in the fire; the founder melteth in vain:" and I shall hope that grief will not so far smother your light as to prevent you from practising the so necessary duty of concurring with him in this blessed design. I would gladly plead for the Comforter's part of it, not against you, Madam, but against your grief; which will have its own violent incursions in your soul, and I think it is not in your power to help it: but I must say, there are comforts still remaining to you, and, therefore, slight them not. It is a Christian art to comfort yourself in the Lord; to say, "I was obliged to render back again this child to the Giver; I have had several years loan of him, and now Christ hath possession of him for eternity. If my Lord would not have him and me

to meet both in one hour at death's threshold, it is his wisdom that so appoints it—I am satisfied; my hour is suspended, not given up.” Madam, I would I could divide sorrow with you: but I am but a beholder—it is easy for me to speak. May the God of comfort speak to you, and allure you with his feasts of love: whatever joy of soul you get now, will never be missed out of the infinite ocean of delight, which is not diminished by drinking at it, or drawing out of it. Madam, my removal from my flock is so heavy to me, that it maketh my life a burden to me. I never had such a longing for death. Grace be with you.

Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in Christ,

S. R.

Kirkcudbright, Oct. 1, 1649.

TO LADY KENMURE. (32.)

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you. We are fallen into winnowing and trying times. I am glad that you hold on to the end, in the same condition and way wherein you have walked these twenty years past. It is either the way of peace, or we are yet in our sins, and have missed the way. The Lord, it is true, hath stained the pride of all our glory; and now, last of all, the sun hath gone down upon many of the prophets: but stumble not, men are men, and God appeareth more and more to be God, and Christ is still Christ. Madam, I had well nigh stumbled, and been cast down; but O

what mercy is it to discern betwixt what is Christ's and what is man's ! and how much the hue, colour, and lustre of gifts and graces dazzle and deceive our weak eyes ! Holiness is not Christ ; nor are the blossoms and flowers of the tree of life, the tree itself. Men and the creatures may wind themselves between us and Christ, and therefore the Lord hath done much to take out of the way all betwixt him and us. The fairest things, and most eminent, are stained, and have lost their lustre. Christ alone keeps his greenness and beauty, and remaineth what he was. O that he were more and more excellent to our apprehensions, (for his excellence is above all apprehensions) and still more and more sweet to our souls ! I would care for nothing, were I but nearer to him ; and yet he flies not from me—I flee from him, but he pursueth.—I hear your Ladyship hath the same esteem of the despised cause and covenant of our Lord you had before—Madam, hold you there ; I dare, and would gladly breathe out my spirit in that way, with a nearer communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, and would seek no more, but that I might die believing. The goodwill of him that dwelt in the bush be with you. Your Ladyship's, at all observance in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Glasgow, Sept. 28, 1651.

To LADY KENMURE. (33.)

Madam,

I HAVE been so long silent that I am almost ashamed now to speak. I hear of your weakly condition of health, which speaks some warning to you to look for a longer life, where you shall have more leisure to praise, than time can give you here: it shall be loss to many; but sure yourself, Madam, shall be free of any loss; and, truly, considering what days we have fallen into, if sailing were not serving of the Lord, (which I can hardly attain) a calm harbour were very good when storms are so high. The forerunner, who hath landed first, must bring the sea-beaten vessel safe to the port, and the sick passengers safe ashore. Much deadness prevaileth over some; but there is much life in Him, who is "the resurrection and the life," to quicken. Oh, how much of our hidden life is without us, and how little and poor a stock is in the hand of some! The only wise God supply what is wanting; the greater your need, the more is owing to you by the promise of grace—the marriage supper of the Lamb must not be marred by too large a foretaste of happiness. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord, at all observance,

S. R.

St. Andrews.

To LADY KENMURE. (34.)

Madam,

I CONFESS I have reason to be grieved at my long silence, or laziness in writing: I am also afflicted to hear that those who were debtors to your Ladyship for better dealing, have served you with such prevarication; you know crookedness is neither strong nor long-enduring; and you know likewise, that these things spring not out of the dust: it is sweet to look upon the lawless and sinful stirrings of the creatures, as ordered by a most holy hand in heaven. O, if some could make peace with God! It would be our wisdom, and afford us much sweet peace, if oppressors were looked upon as passive instruments, like the saw or axe in the carpenter's hand; they are *bidden*, (if such a distinction may be admitted) but not *commanded* of God, to do what they do. Madam, these many years the Lord hath been teaching you to read and study well the book of holy and spotless sovereignty, in suffering from some who are nigh, and some far off. Whoever be the instruments, the replying of the clay to the Potter, the Former of all, is unbeseeming the creature: I hope he will clear you. But when Zion's public evils lie not nigh some of us, and leave no impression upon our hearts, it is no wonder if we are exercised with domestic troubles: but I know you are taught of God to prefer Jerusalem to your chiefest joy. Madam, there is no cause of fainting: wait upon the not-tarrying vision, for it will speak. The only wise

God be with you, and God, even your own God,
bless you.

Yours, in all observance in God,

S. R.

St. Andrews, June, 1657.

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*To the Honourable and Well-beloved PROFESSORS of  
CHRIST and his Truth in sincerity, in IRELAND.*

DEARLY beloved in our Lord, and partakers of the heavenly calling—Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I always, but most of all now in my bonds, (most sweet bonds for Christ my Lord) rejoice to hear of your faith and love. I can, with the greatest assurance, (to the honour of our highest, and greatest, and dearest Lord, let it be spoken) assert, (though I be but a child in Christ, and scarce able to walk but by a hold, and the meanest and less than the least of all saints) that we do not come nigh to the due love and estimation of that fairest among the sons of men. Where can we find a match to Christ, or an equal, or a better than he, among created things? I know, that his sackcloth and ashes are better than the fool's laughter, which is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. But, alas! we do not harden our faces against the cold north storms, that blow upon Christ's *inheritance*. We love well summer religion, and would fain be carried to heaven in a close covered chariot, wishing from our hearts that Christ would give us surety,

you and Christ. Let me be weighed of my Lord in a just balance, if your souls lie not weighty upon me: you go to bed, and you rise with me. Thoughts of your soul, my dearest in the Lord, depart not from me in my sleep: you have a great part of my tears, sighs, supplications, and prayers. O! if I could buy your soul's salvation with any sufferings whatever, and that you and I might meet with joy, when we shall stand before our Judge! Woe! woe shall be your part for evermore, if the gospel be not the savour of life unto life to you. Believe me, I find heaven a city hard to be won. "The righteous will scarcely be saved;" with what violence will heaven be taken! Alas! I see many deceiving themselves: for all will to heaven; all say they have faith; and the greater part in the world know not, and will not consider, that a slip in the matter of their salvation is the most pitiful slip than can be, and that no loss is comparable to this loss. O then, see that there be no error in the work of your salvation, for ye will not believe how quickly the Judge will come! And for yourself, I know that death is waiting, and hovering, and lingering at God's command, that ye may be prepared; then you had need to make use of your time, and to take eternity and time to your riper advisement. A wrong step, in going out of this life, in one respect, is like the sin against the Holy Ghost, and can never be forgiven, because ye cannot come back through the last water to mourn for it. I know your counts are many, and will take telling, and laying, and reckoning, betwixt you and your Lord. Fit your counts, and order

them; lose not the last play, whatever ye do; for in that play with death, your precious soul is the prize. For the Lord's sake, lose not such a treasure. You know, that out of the love I had to your soul, I testified my displeasure and disliking of your ways very often, both in private and public. I am not now a witness of your doings, but your Judge is always your witness. I beseech you, by the mercies of God, by the salvation of your soul, by your comforts when your eye-strings shall break, and the face wax pale, and the soul shall tremble to be out of the lodging of clay, and by your appearance before your lawful Judge—after the sight of this letter, take a new course with your ways; and now, in the end of your day, make sure of heaven; examine yourself if you be in good earnest in Christ. For some are “partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste of the good word of God, and of the powers of the life to come,” and yet have no part in Christ at all. Many think they believe, but never tremble: the devils are farther on than those. Make sure to yourself that you are above ordinary professors: the sixth part of your span-length of days is scarcely before you. Haste, haste, for the tide will not bide. I never knew so well what sin was (howbeit I was preaching it to you) as since I came to Aberdeen. To stand beside a river of fire and brimstone, broader than the earth; and to think, to be bound hand and foot, and cast in the midst of it quick, and to have God locking the prison-door, never to be opened for all eternity—O how it will shake a conscience that hath any life in it!

*To the* REV. WILLIAM DALGLISH.

Reverend and Dear Brother,

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am well, and I verily count more of the sufferings of my Lord, than of this world's lusted and over-gilded glory. I dare not say but my Lord hath fully recompensed my sadness with his joys; my losses with his own presence. I find it a sweet and rich thing to exchange my sorrows with Christ's joys; my afflictions with that sweet peace I have with himself. Go on, my dear brother, in the strength of the Lord; put Christ's love to the trial, and put upon it burdens, and then it will appear love indeed. We employ not his love, and therefore we know it not. Let us be faithful, and care for our own part, which is to do and suffer for him, and lay Christ's part on himself, and leave it there. Duties are ours; events are the Lord's. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to question God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt thou do this and that?" we lose ground; we have nothing to do there. It is our part to let the Almighty exercise his own office. There is nothing left us, but to see how we may be approved of him, and how we may roll the weight of our weak souls, in well-doing, upon him, who is God omnipotent: and when what we thus essay miscarrieth, it shall neither be our sin nor our cross.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

*To the* REV. HUGH M'KAIL.

Reverend and Dear Brother,

I BLESS you for your letter. He is come down as rain upon the mown grass; he hath revived my withèred root, and he is as the dew of herbs. I am most secure in this prison. Salvation is for walls in it, and what think ye of these walls? He maketh the dry plant to bud as the lily, and to blossom as Lebanon. The great Husbandman's blessing cometh down upon the plants of righteousness: who may say this, my dear brother, if I, his poor exiled stranger and prisoner, may not say it? Though all the world should be silent, I cannot hold my peace. Some have written to me that I am possibly too joyful of the cross; but my joy overleapeth the cross—it is bounded and terminated upon Christ. I know the sun will over-cloud and eclipse, and I shall again be put to walk in the shadow. But Christ must be welcome to come and go, as he thinketh meet; yet he would be more welcome to me, I own, to come than go. And I hope he pitieth and pardoneth me, that he causeth me to taste of his sweetness at such a fainting time as this. Holy and blessed is his name, and I cannot conceal his goodness. I can report nothing but good of him, lest others should faint. I hope, when a change cometh, to cast anchor at midnight upon the rock, (which he hath taught me to know in this day-light,) whither I must run, when I must believe in the dark. I am sure it is sin not to eat, when he saith, "Eat, O well-beloved!

and drink abundantly;" it is good to be ever taking from him. And truly I find we have the advantage upon our enemies; we are more than conquerors, through him who hath loved us; and they know not wherein our strength lieth. Pray for me. Grace be with you.

S. R.

Aberdeen.

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TO LADY BOYD.

Madam,

I AM heavy and sad, considering what is betwixt the Lord and my soul, which none seeth but he. I find men have mistaken me; it would be no art, as I now see, to spin small, and make hypocrisy seem a goodly web, and to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly to hell, without observation: so easy is it to deceive men. I have doubted whether I ever knew any thing of Christianity, save the letters of that name: men see but as men, and they call ten twenty, and twenty a hundred; but O, to be approved of God in the heart, and in sincerity, is not an ordinary mercy. My neglects, while I had a pulpit, and other things whereof I am ashamed to speak, meet me now, so as God maketh an honest cross my daily sorrow; and for fear of scandal and stumbling, I must hide this day of the law's pleading. If certainty of salvation were to be bought, God knoweth if I had ten worlds I would not hesitate. I believed, under sufferings for Christ, that I myself should keep the key of

Christ's treasures, and take out comforts when I listed, and eat, and be fat; but I see now, a sufferer for Christ will be made to know himself, as well as another poor sinner; my blessing on the cross of Christ that hath made me see this. O if we could take pains for the kingdom of heaven! but we are satisfied with some ordinary marks of God's children, thinking we have as much as will separate us from reprobates; and thus the devil casteth water on our fire, and blunteth our zeal and care; but I see heaven is not at the next door; sometimes, however, my Lord cometh with a fair hour, and O but his love is sweet, comfortable, and delightful! But our foolish self-love will not be content with a right to Christ, unless we get possession; but Christ is wise, and knoweth that living on trust by faith may well content us. Madam, I know your Ladyship knoweth this, and that made me bold to write of it, that others might reap somewhat by my bonds for the truth; for I should desire, and I aim at this, to have my Lord well spoken of, and honoured, though he should make nothing of me but a bridge over a water.

Thus recommending your Ladyship, your son and children, to his grace, who hath honoured you with a name and room among the living in Jerusalem, and wishing grace to be with your Ladyship,

I remain yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

**To WILLIAM HALLIDAY.**

Loving Friend,

I RECEIVED your letter.—I wish you may take pains for salvation; mistaken grace, and somewhat like conversion, which is not conversion, is the saddest thing in the world: make sure of salvation, and lay the foundations sure, for many are beguiled. Put a low price upon this world; put a high price upon Christ; temptations will come, but if they be not made welcome by you, you have the best of it. Be jealous over yourself, and your own heart. Let not Christ have a faint and feeble soldier of you. Acquaint yourself with prayer; make Christ your Captain and your armour; make conscience of sinning when no eye seeth you. Grace be with you.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To a GENTLEWOMAN, after the Death of her Husband.*

Dear and Loving Sister,

I KNOW you are mindful of your sweet country, and not taking the place of your banishment for your home: sand-blind were our hope, if it could not look over the water to our best heritage. I marvel not, my dear sister, that you complain that you come short of your old wrestling for a blessing, and that you now find it not so. Children are but bribed to



learn their lesson, when they first go to school; and it is enough that those who run a race, see the gold only at the starting place; and possibly they see little more of it, or nothing at all, till they reach the goal, and get the gold in their own hand: but Christ's love, though under a veil, is still love; if you win Christ, though not in the sweet and pleasant way you would have him, it is enough; for the well-beloved cometh not our way, he must choose his way himself. For worldly things, seeing there are meadows and fair flowers in your way to heaven, a glance in passing by is sufficient—he that would reckon, and tell all the stones in his way, in a journey of three or four hundred miles, and write in his note-book all the herbs and flowers growing in his way, might come short of his journey. You cannot stay in your inch of time to lose your day, (seeing you are in haste, and the night and your afternoon will not wait for you,) in setting your heart on this vain world. It were your wisdom to read your note-book, and to have in readiness your business against the time you come to death's water-side. I know your lodging is taken; your fore-runner Christ hath not forgotten that, and therefore you must set yourself to *one thing*, which you cannot well do without. In that our Lord took your husband to himself, I know it was that he might make room for himself: he cutteth off your love to the creature, that you might learn that God only is the right owner of your love, sorrow, loss, sadness, death, or the worst things that are. Christ knoweth well how to use these things, and will make us to be obliged to affliction,

and to thank God, who made us acquainted with such a rough companion, who can force us to Christ. You must learn to make evils your great good, and to spin out comforts, peace, joy, communion with Christ, out of your troubles, for they are Christ's messengers, sent to win you to himself. Thanks to God for crosses: when we count and reckon our losses in seeking God, we find "godliness is great gain." I would counsel you to buy hope, but sell it not, and give not away your crosses for nothing: and seeing Christ hath made the cross the way to heaven, let us count it exceeding joy when we fall into diverse temptations. Thus recommending you to the tender mercy and grace of our Lord,

I remain your loving Brother,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 16, 1637.

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*To EARLSTOUN, Younger.*

Much honoured and well-beloved in the Lord,

YOUR letters give a spur to my laziness in writing. I must first tell you there is not such a glassy, slippery piece of way, between you and heaven, as youth. I have experience here in what I say, and seal what I assert: the old ashes of the sins of my youth are now fire of sorrow to me. Yet I must tell you, the whole saints now triumphant in heaven, and standing before the throne, are nothing but Christ's insolvent debtors—what are they but redeemed sinners? But their redemption is not only past the seal, but com-

pleted; and yours is on the wheels, and in doing. I would be loath to put you off your fears, and your sense of deadness—I would rather wish them to be more—there are some wounds of that nature that their bleeding should not soon be stopped. You must take a house beside your Physician; it will be a miracle if you be the first sick man he put away uncured, and worse than he found you. Christ is faithful, and he hath said, “him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Take hold of that; it cannot be presumption to take that as your own, when you find your wounds pain you. Presumption is ever whole at heart, and hath but the truant sickness, and groaneth only for the fashion: faith hath sense of sickness, and looking to Christ in the promises, is glad to see therein a known face. He who can tell his tale, and send such a letter to heaven as he hath sent to Aberdeen, is very likely to obtain Christ’s hearing—it bodeeth God’s mercy to complain heartily for sin. Wrestle with Christ till you get his blessing, and his blessing is better than other ten blessings. Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness—necessity must not blush to beg—it goes hard with you to be without Christ, and therefore you must cry and knock till he open to you. And for your doubtings, because you are not as you were long since with your master, consider three things: 1st, What if Christ had such wavering thoughts of the bargain of the new covenant betwixt you and him, as you have. 2d, It is not referred to you and your thoughts, what Christ will do with the charters between you and him; your own unbelief hath torn

them; but he hath the principal in heaven with himself: your thoughts are no part of the new covenant. 3d, Doubtings are your sins, but they are Christ's medicines, which, as a physician, he maketh use of for the curing of your pride. I may add, 4thly, in the passing of your bill and your charters, when they passed the Mediator's great seal, and were concluded, Faith's advice was not sought. Faith hath not a voice beyond Christ's merits: blood, blood, your Surety's dear blood, maketh that sure work. The part of faith now (having already closed with Christ for justification) is, to take out a copy of your pardon; and so ye have peace with God, upon the account of Christ; for since faith apprehendeth pardon, but never payeth a penny for it, no marvel that salvation doth not ebb or flow, die and live with the working of faith—but if guiltiness were removed, doubtings would find no friend nor life; and yet faith is to believe the removal of guiltiness in Christ. A reason why you receive less now, as you think, than before, is, I take it, because at our first conversion, our Lord feedeth his lambs with his own hand, but when we grow to some further perfection, we must take heaven by violence; and Christ doth for a while withhold, because he would have us to draw. Remember now that you must live by diligence—laziness is a greater fault now than formerly. Now for myself: I am not the man I go for among my friends. I am very often so, that I know not whether I sink or swim in the water. I find myself at times lighter than froth. I should weigh lighter than vanity in Christ's balance, if my Lord cast not in borrowed

weight and metal, even Christ's righteousness, to weigh for me. The stock I have is not my own; I am but the merchant that traffics with another one's good's; if my creditor, Christ, were to take from me what he hath lent, I should soon fail; but Christ hath made it mine and his. I think it manhood to play the coward, and take shelter by the side of Christ; thus I am not only "saved from my enemies," but "I obtain the victory." I creep under my Lord's wings in the great shower, and the water cannot reach me. Let fools laugh the fool's laughter, and scorn Christ, and bid the weeping captives in Babylon "sing" them "one of the songs of Zion;" we may sing even in our winter's storm, in the expectation of a summer's sun at the turn of the year: no created powers in hell, or out of hell, can mar our Lord's work, or spoil our song of joy; let us then be glad and rejoice in the salvation of our Lord; for faith had never yet cause to have tearful eyes, or a saddened brow, or to droop or die.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 16, 1637.

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**To LADY KILCONQUHAIR.**

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I am glad to hear that you have your face homeward towards your Father's house, now when so many are for a home nearer hand: but your Lord calleth you to another life and glory, than is to be found here; and

therefore I would counsel you to make sure your claim to salvation. You came to this life about a necessary and weighty business, to treat with Christ about your precious soul, the eternal salvation of it. This is the most necessary business you have in this life; and your other doings beside this are but toys and feathers, dreams, and fancies. This is the most needful, and should be done first. Means are provided in the gospel, for your union with Christ. Christ alone is worthy of your soul's love. Christ is a well of life, but who knoweth how deep it is to the bottom? O you poor, dry, and dead souls! why will ye not come hither, and fill your empty vessels, your thirsty souls, from this fair, and deep, and sweet well of life? O to think that Christ should be so large in sweetness and worth, and that we should lose our love so miserably as not to bestow it upon him. Alas! these five thousand years and more, Adam's foolish heirs have been wasting and lavishing out their love and their affections upon dead creatures, and broken idols, and have not brought their love and their heart to Jesus. O that there should be so much spoken, and so much written, and so much thought of creature-vanity, and so little thought of the great, and incomprehensible, and admirable Lord Jesus!

Strive, Mistress, to force your way through the thorns of this life to reach Christ. Lose not sight of him in this cloudy and dark day; learn not from the world to serve Christ, but ask himself the way; the world is a false copy, and a deceitful guide, to follow. Remember my love to your husband. I

wish all to him I have written here. The sweet presence, the long-lasting good-will of our God, the comforts of our Lord Jesus be with you. Help me his prisoner in your prayers, for I remember you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, August 8, 1637.

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*To* LADY FORRET.

Worthy Mistress,

I LONG to hear from you. I hear Christ hath been so kind as to visit you with sickness, and to bring you to the door of the grave, but you found the door shut, (blessed be his glorious name) until you be riper for eternity: he will have more service of you. O that Christ had his own of us! We have all idol love, and are inclined to love other things beside our Lord; and therefore our Lord hunteth for our love more ways than one or two.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 9, 1637.

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*To* LADY EARLSTOUN.

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you. I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I exhort you to go on in your journey; your day is short, and your afternoon sun will soon go down: make an end of your accounts with your Lord; for death and judgment

are tides that wait no man. Salvation is supposed to be at the door, and Christianity is thought an easy task; but I find it hard, and the way strait and narrow, were it not that my Guide is content to wait on me, and to care for a weary traveller. Hurt not your conscience with any known sin; let your children be as so many flowers borrowed from God's garden; if the flowers die or wither, thank God for a summer's loan of them. Set your heart upon heaven, and trouble not your spirit with this clay-idol of the world, which is but vanity, and hath but the lustre of the rainbow in the air, which cometh and goeth with a flying March shower. The great messenger of the covenant, the Son of God, establish you on your Rock, and keep you to the day of his coming.

Yours,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 7, 1637.

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*To CARLETOUN.*

Worthy and much honoured,

I RECEIVED your letter from my brother, to the which I now answer particularly. I confess two things of myself. 1st, Woe is me, that men should think there is any thing in me. He is my witness, before whom I am as crystal; that if others saw what I see, they would look by me, but not to me. 2d, I know this shower of his free grace was needful for me, otherwise I should have withered. I know also that I have need of a buffeting tempter, that grace may be put to exercise, and I kept low.



Worthy and dear brother, I write that from my heart which ye now read. 1st, I vouch, that sighing under the cross of Christ is sweeter to me by far, than all the kingdoms in the world could possibly be. 2d, If you and my dearest acquaintance in Christ, reap any fruit by my sufferings, let me be weighed in God's even balance, if my joy be not fulfilled. What am I, to carry the marks of such a great King? 3d, Let no man think he shall lose at Christ's hands in suffering for him: herein find I liberty, joy, access, life, comfort, love, faith, submission, patience, and resolution, to take delight in waiting for him—and withal, in my race he hath come near me, and let me see the gold and crown: what then want I but fruition and real enjoyment, which is reserved to my better country? 4th, I doubt not but my Lord is preparing me for heavier trials. I am most ready, at the good pleasure of my Lord, and in the strength of his grace, for any thing he shall be pleased to call me to; neither shall the last messenger, death, be held at the door, when he shall knock. If my Lord will take honour of such a one as me, how glad and joyful shall my soul be! I know that my Master will win the day, and that he hath taken the ordering of my sufferings in his own hand. 5th, I am nevertheless often laid in the dust, and urged by the tempter, (who can turn our faithless apprehensions to his own account,) to sin against the unchangeable love of my Lord; and, when I think upon the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk at Anwoth, and of my dumb sabbaths, my sorrowful eyes make me look

upon Christ as angry with me: but I forbid my thoughts to receive slanders of my Preserver. Now my dearest in Christ, the great messenger of the covenant, the only wise and all-sufficient Jehovah, establish you to the end. I hear the Lord hath been at your house, and hath called home your wife to her rest. I know, Sir, that you see the Lord loosing the pins of your tabernacle, and wooing your love from this world, and calling upon you to be making yourself ready to go to your Father's country, which shall be a sweet fruit of that visitation. You know to send the Comforter was a King's promise, when he ascended on high. You have claim to, and interest in that promise. All love, all mercy, all grace and peace, all multiplied saving consolations, all joy and faith in Christ, all stability and confirming strength of grace, and the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush, be with you.

Your unworthy Brother,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 15, 1637.

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To JOHN GORDON, *Esq. at Riscoin, Galloway.*

My worthy and dear Brother,

MISPEND not your short sand-glass, which runneth very fast; seek your Lord in time: let me obtain of you a letter, under your own hand, for a promise to God, by his grace, to take a new course of walking with God. Heaven is not at the next door; I find it hard to be a Christian; there is no little striving and pressing to get in at heaven's

gates; it is a castle taken by force: "Many shall strive to enter in, and shall not be able." I beseech you in the Lord, make conscience of rash and passionate oaths, of raging and sudden revenging anger, of drinking, of needless company, of Sabbath-breaking, of hurting any one under you by word or deed, of hating your very enemies. "Except ye receive the truth as a little child," and be as meek and gentle as a babe, "ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God:" that is a word that should touch you near, and make you stoop and cast yourself down, and make your great spirit fall. I know this will not be easily done; but I recommend it to you, as you value your part of the kingdom of heaven. Brother, I may, from new experience speak of Christ to you. O, if you saw in him what I now see! a river of God's unseen joys have flowed over my soul since I parted with you: I would gladly be without part, so that you might have it. This clay-idol, the world, would seem to you then not worth a fig; time will eat you out of possession of it; when your eye-strings break, and the breath groweth cold, and the imprisoned soul looketh out at the windows of the clay-house, ready to leap out into eternity, what would you then give for a lamp full of oil? O seek it now!

What I write to you, I write to your wife.—  
Grace be with you. Your loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 14, 1637.

## To LADY HALHILL.

Dear and Christian Lady,

I LONGED much to write to your Ladyship; but now the Lord offering a fit occasion, I would not omit to do it. I cannot but acquaint your Ladyship with the kind dealing of Christ to my soul in this house of my pilgrimage, that your Ladyship may know, Christ is as good as he is called: for at my first entry into this trial, (being cast down and troubled with jealousies of his love, whose name and testimony I now bear in my bonds,) I feared that I was but a dry tree cast out of the vineyard; but, blessed be his name! the dry tree was in the fire but was not burned, his dew came down and quickened the root of a withered plant, and now he is come again with joy, and hath been pleased to feast his afflicted prisoner with the joy of his consolations: now I weep, but am not sad; I am chastened, but I die not; I have loss, but I want nothing; this water cannot drown me, this fire cannot burn me, because of the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush. The worst things of Christ—his reproaches, his cross—are better than Egypt's treasures: he hath opened his door and taken a poor sinner into his house of wine.

Remember my service to your husband, and to your son, my acquaintance. I wish Christ had his young love, and that in the morning he would start to the gate, to seek that which this world knoweth

not, and therefore doth not seek it.—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March, 14, 1637.

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To LADY BOYD.

My very Honourable and Christian Lady,

I RECEIVED your letter, and am well pleased that your thoughts of Christ stay with you, and that your purpose still is, by all means, to take the kingdom of heaven by violence, which is no small conquest: and it is a degree of watchfulness and thankfulness also, to observe sleepiness and unthankfulness. We have all good cause to complain of false light, that playeth the thief and stealeth away the lantern; when it comes to the practice of constant walking with God, our journey is broken ten times a day. I have been somewhat nearer the Bridegroom; but when I draw nigh, and see my vileness, for shame I would be out of his presence again. O, what am I, to stand beside the high and holy Lord who inhabiteth eternity! And for Christ's joyful coming and going, which your Ladyship speaketh of, I bear with it as love can permit: it should be enough to me, if I were wise, that Christ will have joy and sorrow share the lives of the saints, as the night and the day are the kindly partners and sharers of time; but if sorrows take the greater half of our days here, I know joy's day shall dawn, and do more than recompense all our sad hours. Let the Lord

Jesus, if his will be so, weave my span-length of time with white and black, weal and woe, in one web; let the rose be neighboured with the thorn, yet hope, that maketh not ashamed, hath told the mourners in Zion, that it shall not be long so—in this hope I sleep quietly in Christ's bosom till he come, who is not slack; and should sleep on, were it not that the cries of an unbelieving heart awaken me. O, if I could please myself in Christ only!

All your Ladyship can expect for your good-will to me and my brother, is the prayers of a prisoner of Jesus, to whom I recommend your Ladyship's house and children, and in whom I am, Madam, your Ladyship's in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 8, 1637.

To MARGARET BALLANTYNE.

Mistress,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be unto you. It is more than time I should have written to you; but it is yet good time, if I could help your soul to mend its pace, and to go more swiftly towards your heavenly country; for truly ye have need to make all haste, because the inch of your day that remaineth will quickly slip away—for whether we sleep or wake, our glass runneth, and time waiteth for no man. Beware of being deceived in the matter of your salvation: woe, woe to them for evermore, that lose the prize; for what remains when the soul is once lost, but that they lie down in sorrow, and

are clothed with everlasting shame ! I would seek no further measure of faith to begin withal, than to believe really and steadfastly the doctrine of God's justice, his all-devouring wrath and everlasting burnings wherewith sinners are burned, body and soul. Alas ! the greater part of this world run to the place of that torment rejoicing, and dancing, eating and drinking, and sleeping. My counsel is, that ye start in time to follow after Christ ; for, if ye go quickly, ye shall overtake him. O Lord God ! what is so needful as this—Salvation ? Fy upon this condemned and foolish world, that would give so little for salvation. O ! if free salvation were proclaimed in that day when the trumpet of God shall awake the dead, how many buyers would there then be ! Therefore look if you can give out your money, (as Isaiah speaketh, chap. liv. 2.) for bread, and take Christ and his blood for a pledge of heaven ; it is a dry and hungry part that the Esaus of the world hunt after. I see thousands following the chase, and in the pursuit of such things, while, in the meantime, they lose the blessing, and, when all is done, they have caught nothing, but lie down hungry, and go to their bed in the dark, for God saith to them, Isa. l. 11. “ This shall ye have at my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow : ” and truly he cannot sleep smoothly, nor rest sweetly, who hath sorrow for his pillow. Rouse up, therefore, your soul, and ask how Christ and your soul have met together. I am sure they never won Christ who were never sick at heart for him—too many *whole* souls think they have met with Christ, who had never a wearied night for

the want of him; but, alas! what the richer are men, that they dreamed the last night they had much gold, and when they awoke in the morning, they found it was but a dream? I beseech you in the Lord Jesus, beware of unsound work in the matter of your salvation. You may not, you cannot do without Christ: then after this day, make a covenant with Christ, that thereafter there may be no happiness to you but Christ—no seeking for any thing but Christ. Woe upon all love but the love of Christ!

Thus recommending Christ to you, and you to him, for evermore, I rest. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To MARGARET REID.

My dear and worthy Sister,

You are truly blessed of the Lord, however an unkind world frown upon you, if you continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel. It is good there is a heaven, and it is not a night-dream or a fancy: it is a wonder that men do not deny there is a heaven, as they deny that there is a way to it but of men's making. You have learned of Christ that there is a heaven; contend for it, and contend for Christ; bear well and submissively the hard cross of this step-mother world, that God will not have to be yours. I confess it is hard, and I would I were able to ease

you of your burden ; but, believe me, this world, (which the Lord will not have to be yours,) is but the dross, the refuse, of God's creation, the moveables, not the heritage ; it is your Father's blessing and Christ's birth-right, that our Lord is keeping for you : and I persuade you, your seed shall also inherit the earth, (if that be good for them) for that is promised to them. Ere ye were born, crosses in number, weight, and measure, were appointed for you, and your Lord will lead you through them—make sure of Christ, and the blessings of the earth will follow. Make fast work. See that Christ lay the ground stone of your profession ; for wind and rain will not wash away his building : his works have no shorter date than to stand for evermore. I should twenty times have perished in my affliction, if I had not leaned upon the stone, the Foundation-stone, the Corner-stone, laid in Zion : and I desire never to rise off this stone.

Now, the very God of peace confirm and establish you unto the day of the blessed appearance of Christ Jesus. God be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

TO JAMES BAUTIE.

Loving Brother,

I RECEIVED your letter, and render you thanks for the same ; but I have not time to answer all the heads of it, as the bearer can inform you : yet I

would say a few things—for your failings, even when you have made a covenant with Christ, I would say two things. 1. In the most grave and serious work of our salvation, we should ever be found wanting, if Christ did not put on us his merits, that we might bear weight. 2. It is a sweet law of the new covenant, and a privilege of the new burgh, that citizens pay according to their means; for the new covenant saith not, so much obedience and no less, under the pain of condemnation. Christ takes as poor men may give. He breaketh not a bruised reed, nor quencheth the smoking flax; but if the wind blow, he sheltereth the spark, till it rise to a flame. The law comes upon us with three demands—for all the heart, for all the soul, and for all the whole strength; but the covenant seeketh not a certain measure of obedience as the *condition of it*, because forgiveness hath always place. Hence I draw this conclusion—to think that matters go back betwixt Christ and us, because of deficiency in our obedience, is a piece of old Adam's pride, who would either be at legal payment or nothing. We would still have God in our debt, and buy his kindness with our merits. No marvel, then, of doubtings whether you be in the covenant or not; for pride maketh loose work of the covenant of grace, and will not let Christ be sole bargain-maker.

To speak to you particularly and shortly.

1. All the truly regenerated cannot tell you determinately, the measure of their dejection; because Christ beginneth young with many, and stealeth into their heart, ere they wit of themselves. I grant

many are blinded in a good cheap conversion, that never cost them a sick night; yet, I would say, if other marks be found that Christ is indeed come in, never doubt and quarrel because ye know not how he came—"the wind bloweth where it listeth;" all the world's wit cannot perfectly render a reason why the winds should be a month in the east, six weeks possibly in the west, and the space only of an afternoon in the south or north. You will not find out all the steps of Christ's way with a soul, do what ye can.

2 You object, the truly regenerate should love God for himself; and ye fear that you love him more for his benefits (as incitements and motives to love him) than for himself. I answer, To love God for himself, as the last end; and also for his benefits, as incitements and motives to love him, may very well stand together. You will not say, I hope, that benefits are the only reason and ground of your love: it seems there is a better foundation for it—if there be any flaw in it, mend it shortly.

3. You feel not such mourning in Christ's absence as ye would. I answer, that the regenerate mourn at all times, and all in a like measure for his absence, I deny. There are different degrees of mourning, less or more, as they have less or more love to him, and less or more sense of his absence; but some they must have.

4. You blame yourself, that some truths find more credit with you than others. You do well; for God is true in the least as well as in the greatest, and he must be so to you. Our Lord, in all his

writings, never contradicted himself yet; although the best of the regenerate have slipped here, labour ye to hold your feet.

5. Comparing the state of one truly regenerate, whose heart is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and yours, which is full of uncleanness and corruption, you stand dumb and discouraged, and dare not sometimes call Christ your own. I answer, the best of the regenerate have their infirmities, which clog them all their days; and wash as they will, some defilement will remain, but let not this put you from the well.

6. Ye doubt whether your love to God can be sincere, because conscious that idols find an entrance into your heart? I answer, although there be some side-looks in our heart to an idol, yet love in its own measure may be sound; for glory must purify and perfect our love: it will never till then be absolutely pure; but if the idol reign, and Christ be but secondary, all is not right; therefore examine well.

7. The assurance of Christ's love ye say, would be the most comfortable news that ever ye heard. I answer, O, that you knew and felt it, as I have done! Sweet, sweet hath it been to me; but for you, follow on. Your pearl is not far off. Hunger on; for Christ, who is pleased with the importunity of hungry souls, will satisfy all your desires—and if he delay, yet come you not away, though you should faint at his feet.

8. You crave my mind, whether sound comfort may be found in prayer, when conviction of a known idol is present? I answer, an idol, as an idol, can-

not stand with sound comfort; for that comfort which is got at Dagon's feet, is but a cheat; yet sound comfort and conviction of an eye to an idol, may as well dwell together as tears and joys: but let this do you no ill, I speak it only for your encouragement, that you may make the best out of your joys you can, although you find them mixed with blemishes. Sole conviction, if without remorse and grief, is not enough; therefore lend it a tear, when you do attain to it.

9. You question, when you attain to more fervency in prayer sometimes with your neighbour, than when you are alone, whether hypocrisy be in it or not? I answer, if it be always so, no doubt a spice of hypocrisy is in it, which must be taken heed to; but possibly desertion may be in private, and presence in public, and then the case is clear.

10. You seek to know the difference between the motions of the Spirit in their least measure, and the natural joys of your own heart? I answer, if ye sorrow for any thing that may offend your Lord, it will speak the singleness of your love to him.

Lastly, you ask, what to do when promises are borne in upon you, and sense of impenitency for sins of youth, hindereth application? I answer, if it be living sense, it may stand with application; and in this case put out your hand, take and eat, in God's name: if dead, so that the sins of youth are not repented of, "nor yet the impenitency mourned," then as faith and impenitency cannot stand together, so neither can that sense and application consist with each other.

Brother, excuse my brevity, for time straiteneth me, that I get not my mind said in these things, but must refer that to a new occasion, if God offer it. Brother, pray for me. Grace be with you.

Yours in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JOHN STEWART, Provost of Ayr, now in Ireland. (1.)

Much-honoured Sir,

I LONG to hear from you, being now removed from my flock, and the prisoner of Christ at Aberdeen. I would not have you to think it strange that your journey to New England hath met with a check: it indeed hath made my heart heavy; yet I know it is no dumb providence, but a speaking one, whereby our Lord speaketh his mind to you, though for the present you do not well understand what he saith—however it be, he who sitteth upon the floods, hath shown you his marvellous kindness in the great depths. I know your loss is great, and your hope is gone far from you: but I entreat you, Sir, expound aright our Lord's laying all hindrances in the way. I persuade myself, your heart aimeth at the footsteps of the flock, to feed beside the shepherds' tents, and to dwell beside him whom your soul loveth; and this being your desire, remember that a poor prisoner of Christ saith it to you, Wait on, "he that believeth maketh not haste," Isa. xxviii. 16. I hope you have been asking what the Lord meaneth,

and what farther may be his will, in reference to your return. My dear brother, let God do with you what he will, he will end all with consolation, and will bring glory out of your sufferings; and could you wish a better thing? This water was in your way to heaven, and written in your Lord's book—it was needful for you to cross it; bend, therefore, to his wise and unerring providence. Let not the censures of men, who see but the outsides of things, (and scarce well that) abate your courage and rejoicing in the Lord: howbeit your faith seeth but the dark side of providence, yet it hath a better side, and God will let you see it. Learn to believe that Christ is better than his strokes, himself and his promises better than his frowns. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God;” hence, I infer, that losses, crosses, disappointments, ill-tongues, loss of friends, relations, houses or country, are God's workmen, set to work out good to you out of every thing that befalleth you. Let not the Lord's dealing seem harsh, rough, or unfatherly, because it is unpleasant: when the Lord's blessed will blows across your desires, it is best in humility to strike sail to him, and to be willing to be led any way our Lord pleaseth. It is a point of denial of yourself, to be as if you had not a will, but had made a free disposition of it to God; and to make use of his will for your own, is both true holiness, and your ease and peace: you know not what the Lord is working out of this, but you shall know it hereafter.—And what I write to you, I write to your wife: I compassionate her case, but

entreat her not to fear or faint; this journey is a part of her wilderness to heaven and the promised land, and there are fewer miles behind; it is nearer the dawning of the day to her, than when she went out of Scotland. I should be glad to hear that you and she have comfort and courage in the Lord. Let me hear from you, for I am anxious what to do: if I saw a call for New England, I would follow it. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

*To JOHN STEWART, Provost of Ayr, now in
Ireland. (2.)*

Much-honoured, and dearest in Christ,

GRACE, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you. I expected the comfort of a letter to a prisoner from you, ere now. I am here, Sir, passing away a part of my inch of time; and when I awake first in the morning, (which is always with great heaviness and sadness,) this question is brought to my mind, Am I serving God or not? Not that I doubt of the truth of this honourable cause wherein I am engaged, (nay, I dare venture into eternity, and before my Judge, that I now suffer for the truth,) but my closed mouth, my silent sabbaths, the memory of my communion with Christ, in many fair, fair days in Anwoth, (whereas my Master getteth no service of

my tongue now, as then,) hath almost broken my faith into two halves : yet, in my deepest apprehensions of his anger, I see through a cloud that I am wrong; and he, in love to my soul, hath taken up the controversy betwixt faith and apprehension, and a judgment is passed on Christ's side of it, and I subscribe the judgment. The Lord is equal in his ways, but my guiltiness often overmastereth my believing. My guiltiness and the sins of my youth are come up against me, and they would fain mix in my sufferings, as deserving causes of God's justice ; but I pray God, for Christ's sake, he give them not that place. Let hell, and the powers of hell, be let loose against me, to do their worst, I care not, so that Christ, and my Father, and his Father, be magnified in my sufferings. I fear I adore his comforts more than himself, and that I love the apples of life more than the tree of life.

Sir, write to me—commend me to your wife—mercy be her portion. Grace be with you.

Yours in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JOHN STEWART, *Provost of Ayr, now in Ireland.* (3.)

Worthy and dearly-beloved in our Lord,

I WAS refreshed and comforted by your letter : what I wrote to you for your comfort, I do not remember ; but I believe love will prophesy homeward, as it would have it. I wish I could help you to

praise his great and holy name, who keepeth the feet of his saints, and hath numbered all your goings. I know our dearest Lord will pardon and pass by our honest errors and mistakes, when we mind his honour; yet I know, none of you have seen the other half, and the hidden side of your wonderful return home to us again. I am confident you shall yet say, that God's mercy blew your sails back to Ireland again. Worthy and dear Sir, I cannot but give you an account of my present state, that you may go an errand for me to my high and royal Master. First, I am very often turning both the sides of my cross, especially my silent sabbaths; not because I desire to find a defect in my Lord's love, but fear of guiltiness is a tale-bearer betwixt me and Christ, and is still whispering ill thoughts of my Lord, to weaken my faith—I would rather a cloud went over my comforts, than that my faith should be hurt. I desire to give no faith, no credit to my sorrow when it suggests hard thoughts of Christ; yet these thoughts awake with me in the morning—Oh, what service can a silenced man do in Christ's house! I am a dry tree! Alas! I can neither plant nor water! Oh, if I might but speak to three or four herd-boys of my Master, I would be satisfied to be the meanest and most obscure of all the pastors in this land. But he saith, "I will not send you—I have no errands for you:" my desire to serve him is sick of jealousy, lest he be unwilling to employ me. Secondly, this is seconded with another,—What have I done in Anwoth? The fair work that my Master began there, is like a bird dying in the shell; and

what then shall I have to show of all my labour, in the day of my appearance before him, when the Master of the vineyard calleth the labourers, and giveth them their hire? Yet, Thirdly, I truly repent, and pray Christ to pardon my querulous unbelieving sadness and sorrow. I rue from my heart, that I yielded so far to the Law, as to apprehend wrath in my Lord Jesus; for truly I am a debtor to his love—but I wish he would give me grace to learn to do without his comforts, and to give thanks and believe, when the sun is not in the firmament. Now, for any resolution to go to any other country, I dare not speak one word; my hopes of enlargement are cold; my hopes of re-entry into my Master's vineyard are far colder: I have no resting-place for my faith, but bare Omnipotency, and God's holy arm and good-will; here I desire to stay and winter, and ride at anchor, until God send fair weather again—but there will be sad days ere it comes to that. Remember my bonds.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To NINIAN MURE.

Loving Friend,

I RECEIVED your letter: I entreat you now, in the morning of your life, seek the Lord and his face; beware of the folly of dangerous youth, a perilous time for your soul. Love not the world; keep

faith and truth with all men, in your covenants and bargains; walk with God, for he seeth you: do nothing but that which ye may and would do, if your eye-strings were breaking, and your breath growing cold. You heard the truth of God from me; my dear heart, follow it, forsake it not; prize Christ and salvation above all the world. To live after the manner and course of the rest of the world, will not bring you to heaven; without faith in Christ, and repentance, ye cannot see God. Take pains for salvation; "press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling:" if you watch not night and day against evils that beset you, you will fall short: beware of lying, swearing, and the rest of the works of the flesh; "because for these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience"—how sweet soever they may seem for the present, yet the end of these courses is the eternal wrath of God, and utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Grace be with you.

Your loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JANE BROWN.

Mistress,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I am glad that you go on to follow Christ in this dark and cloudy time: it were good to sell all other things for him; for when all these days are over, we shall find it our advantage that we have taken part with Christ.

Oh, how sweet a thing were it for us, to learn to make our burdens light, by framing our hearts to the burden, and making our Lord's will a law! and we have good cause to wait patiently, for ere it be long, our Master will be with us, and bring every thing to light. Happy are they that are found watching: our sand-glass is not so long as to weary us in doing so; time will eat away, and root out our woes and sorrow; our heaven is in the bud, and growing up to a harvest; why then should we not follow on, seeing our span-length of time will come to an inch? Therefore I commend Christ to you as the staff of your old age: let him have now the rest of your days, and think not much of a storm upon the sea, when Christ is in the ship. I rejoice to hear your son John is coming to know Christ, and taste of his love—he will not lose his pains or rue of that choice. I had always (as I often said to you) a great love to dear Mr. John B——, because I thought I saw Christ in him more than in his brethren; and I wish you would let him read my letter, and the joy I have in his appearing on the side of the Lord Jesus.

Grace be with you,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 13, 1637.

TO LADY BUSBIE.

Mistress,

I AM glad to hear that you and Christ are one, and that you have made him your one thing; where many are painfully toiled in seeking many things,

and their many things are nothing. It is only best you set yourself apart as a thing laid up for Christ alone: he hath been going about you these many years, by afflictions, to engage you to himself; it were a pity and a loss to say him nay. Think well of the visitations of the Lord: for I find one thing, I saw not well before, that when the saints are under trials, and well humbled, little sins raise great cries in the conscience; and in prosperity, conscience is a Pope, which gives dispensations and great latitude to our heart. Oh, how little we care for pardon at Christ's hands, when we make dispensations! but when a cross without begets a heavier cross within, we play no longer with our idols. • It is good still to be severe against ourselves; for we but transform God's mercy into an idol, and an idol that hath a dispensation to give, for turning of the grace of God into wantonness. Happy are they that know God, wrath, justice, and sin, as they are in themselves! What a sweet, what a safe and sure way is it, to come up from the wilderness leaning on a Saviour! That Christ and a sinner should be one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation! What more could love do? and what a sweet perfume doth Christ cast on his lower garden, where there grow but wild flowers, (if we speak by way of comparison,) but there are none but perfect garden-flowers in heaven, and the perfection of all is Christ—he graceth heaven and all his Father's house with his presence—he is a rose that beautifieth all the upper garden of God; let us then go on to meet with him, and to be filled with the sweetness of his

love.. Nothing will hold us from him—he hath promised to put time, sin, hell, devils, men, and death out of our way, and to make smooth the rough way betwixt us and him, that we may meet. It is strange and wonderful, that he should desire to have the company of us sinners with himself in heaven! And now, the supper is abiding us; Christ the Bridegroom, is waiting till the bride is ready for the marriage. O fools, what do we here? and why sit we still? why sleep we in the prison? were it not best to make us wings, to flee up to our blessed Bridegroom, and our fellow-friends? I think, Madam, you are looking that way, and this is your second or third thought; make forward, your Guide waiteth for you. I cannot but bless you, for your care and kindness to the saints. God give you to find mercy in that day of our Lord Jesus, to whose saving grace I recommend you.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To WILLIAM RIGG, of *Athernie*.

Much-honoured and worthy Sir,

YOUR letter, full of complaints, bemoaning your guiltiness, hath much humbled me: but give me leave to say, you seem to lean too much to the law—you will not gain much by being advocate for the law; nevertheless, I am sure you desire to take God's part against yourself, (whatever your guiltiness be) yet, when it falleth into the sea of God's

mercy, it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean. There is nothing to be done here, but let the old man bear his condemnation, seeing in Christ he was condemned; for the law hath but power over your worst half: let the blame therefore lie where the blame should be, and let the new man be sure to say—"I am comely as the tents of Kedar, howbeit I be black" and sunburnt, by sitting beside a body of sin—I seek no more in saying thus, than room for Christ's throne to appear, whereto a sinner condemned by the law may appeal; and I am sorry that my conscience is not so tender and alive. My greatest desires are these two:—

1st, That Christ would take me in hand to cure me, and undertake for a sick man. I know I should not die under his hand; and yet in this, while I still doubt, I believe through a cloud, that sorrow hath but put a vail upon Christ's love.

2d, Could I once fully apprehend, believe, and see the love of the Son of God, it were the fulfilling of the desires of the only happiness I wish for; but the truth is, I hinder my communion with him, by want of both faith and repentance, and because I will make an idol of Christ's consolations. O how far are his ways above mine! Oh, how little of him do I see! May the Lord, of the fulness of his riches, satisfy a famished man!

Your own in his dearest Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 10, 1697.

To his Worthy and Much-honoured Friend,

FULK ELIES.

Worthy and much-honoured in our Lord,

I AM glad of our more than paper-acquaintance : seeing we have one Father, it mattereth the less though we never saw one another's face. I profess myself most unworthy to follow the camp of such a worthy and renowned Captain as Christ. It is true, it is because we are heart-atheists by nature, and cannot take providence aright, that we dream of an unequal providence; as if God's line, whereby he measureth joy and sorrow to the sons of men, were crooked and unjust: but our Lord dealeth out good and evil, and measureth them in a just and even balance. The summer sun of the saint shineth not on them in this life: how should we have complained if our Lord had reversed the order of his providence, and had ordered matters thus—That the saints should have enjoyed heaven, glory, and ease, *first*; and then Methuselah's days of sorrow and daily misery? We should think a short heaven, no heaven. Certainly his ways are past finding out! You complain of the evil of heart-atheism; and write of that to a man who feels himself to be a greater atheist than any other man can be. Alas, light findeth not that reverence and fear, that a plant of God's setting should find in our soul! How do we by nature, as others, detain and captivate the truth of God in unrighteousness, and so make God's light a bound prisoner! Certainly there come great mists

and clouds from the lower part of our soul, our earthly affections, to the higher part which is our conscience, either natural or renewed—if we had more practice of obedience, we should have more true light. I think, laying aside all other guiltiness, this one, the violence done to God's candle in our soul, were sufficient to condemn us; and there is no helping of this, but by striving to stand in awe of God's light, lest it make manifest things against us we shall tremble to see. I see there is a necessity that we protest against the doings of the old man, and raise up a party against our worst half, to accuse, condemn, sentence, and with sorrow bemoan the dominion of sin's kingdom; for Christ once condemned sin in the flesh, and we are to condemn it over again; and if there had not been such a thing as the grace of Jesus, I should have long since given up the hope of heaven, and the expectation to see God: but grace, grace, free grace, the merits of Christ for nothing, hath been, and must be the rock, that we drowning souls must swim to. New washing, renewed application of redemption purchased by that precious blood, that sealeth the free covenant, is a thing of daily and hourly use to a poor sinner. Till we be in heaven, we shall need, and should resolve to apply peace to our souls, from the new and living way; and Jesus, who cleanseth and cureth the leprous soul, must be our song on this side of heaven's gates; and even when we have won the castle, then must we eternally sing—"Worthy, worthy, is the Lamb who hath saved us, and washed us in his own blood." I would counsel all the ran-

somed ones to learn this song betimes: I think it is possible even on earth to build a new Jerusalem, a little heaven of this surpassing love. God either send me more of this love, or take me quickly over the water, where I may be filled with his love! Worthy Sir, let me have your prayers.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

To JAMES LINDSAY.

Dear Brother,

YOUR constant and daily observation of God's dealings with you, in his coming, going, ebbing, flowing, &c. giveth me (a witless and lazy observer of the Lord's way and workings) a severe reproof. Could I keep sight of him, and know when I want, and behave as became me in that condition, I should bless my case; if I could but creep on nearer to my Lord while he is away, I should think it a happy absence. 2d, If I knew the Beloved were only gone away for trial, and for farther humiliation, and not provoked to withdraw himself by my guiltiness, I would hold my peace at his absence: but Christ's absence, bought with my sin, is a sorrow upon either side; and to which then shall I turn? 3d, I know, as night and shadows are good for flowers, and moonlight and dews are better than a continual sun: so is Christ's absence of special use, and it hath some nourishing virtue in it, and giveth sap to humility, and putteth an edge on hunger, and furnisheth a

fair occasion for faith to put forth its hand, and lay hold on what it seeth not. 4th, It is mercy's wonder, and grace's wonder, that Christ will take up his abode in such a polluted dwelling as our soul, in which the old man is ever breaking out in rebellion against the heavenly Guest; may I not say, Lord Jesus, "what doest thou here?" But I should lose myself, were I to go on into this depth and wonder; since free mercy and infinite merit have agreed to make a sinful soul the habitation of the Holy Spirit. 5th, Sanctification and mortification of our desires, are the hardest part of Christianity. It is in a manner *natural* to us to leap for joy, when we think of the new Jerusalem; but to obey, and work out our own salvation, and to perfect holiness, is the troublesome and stormy north-side of our way. 6th, For your question concerning reprobates, I say, first, there are with you more worthy and learned than I am; Messrs. Dickson, Blair, and Hamilton, who can more fully satisfy you; but I shall briefly speak, what I think, as follow:—

All God's justice towards man and angels, floweth from an act of the absolute, sovereign, free will of God, who is our former and potter, and we are but clay: for if he had forbidden to eat of the rest of the trees of the garden of Eden, and commanded Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; that command, no doubt, had been as just as this—"Eat of all the trees, but not at all of the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The reason is, because his will is his justice; and he willeth not things without himself, because they are in them-

selves just. His will is essentially just and holy, and the prime rule of holiness and justice. God hath said, "Believe in Christ, and you shall be saved," because his eternal and essentially just will hath so enacted and decreed;—suppose natural reason cannot conceive this; this is the deep and special mystery of the gospel. God hath obliged and bound all the visible church to believe this promise, "He that believeth shall be saved;" yet there is no salvation decreed to reprobates—but the obligation to believe, flowing from God's command, is binding upon all—the faith that God seeketh from all, is, that they rely upon Christ, as despairing of their own righteousness, leaning wholly, and withal humbly, as weary and laden, upon Christ, as on the resting stone laid in Zion: but he seeketh not, that, without being weary of their sin, they rely on Christ, mankind's Saviour; for to rely on Christ, and not to be weary of sin, is presumption, not faith: true faith is ever accompanied by a broken and contrite spirit; and it is impossible that faith can be, where there is not, in some measure, an humble and a contrite sense of sin. No one is absolutely obliged to believe, that Christ died for him in particular; but all are obliged to believe, that Christ died for those who are weary, burdened, sick, and condemned in their own consciences, and struck dead by the law's sentence, and who have indeed embraced him as offered; which is a second and subsequent act of faith, following after a coming to him, and closing with him. God is just in punishing reprobates; because out of pride of heart, confiding in their righteous-

ness, they rely not on Christ as the Saviour of all them that come to him; this, God may justly require of *all*; because in Adam they had perfect ability to do so: and men are guilty, because they love their own inability, and rest upon themselves, and refuse to deny their own righteousness, and to look to Christ in whom there is righteousness for wearied sinners. It is one thing to rely, lean, and rest upon Christ in humility and weariness of spirit, and denying our own righteousness, believing him to be the only righteousness of wearied sinners; and it is another thing to believe Christ died for *me*, John, Thomas, Anna, upon an intention and decree to save us individually; for—the first of these goeth first; the latter is always after, in due order: the first is faith, the second is a fruit of faith. It is vain to say, I know not if Christ died for me, John, Thomas, Anna, by name; and therefore I dare not rely on him—it is not faith to seek to know God's intention and decree of election at the first, before you feel sin a burden. Look first to your own intention and soul, and if you find sin a burden, and can and do rest under that burden upon Christ; if this once be, then come, and believe in particular, or rather apply by sense (for in my judgment, it is a fruit of belief, not belief) and feeling, the good-will, intention, and gracious purpose of God respecting your salvation. The sin of reprobates is, that they condemn Christ, and love their inability to come to him; and he who loveth his chains, deserveth chains. And thus, in short, remember my bonds.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R

To LADY LARGIRIE.

Mistress,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I hope you bear in mind what conditions passed between Christ and you, at your first meeting. You remember he said, your summer days would have clouds, and your rose a prickly thorn beside it. In heaven alone is Christ enjoyed without alloy; here we must share his cross: yet I know no tree beareth sweeter fruit than Christ's cross. It is your part to take Christ as he is given to you in this life: if we could keep firm hold of him, the field were won. Yet a little while, and Christ will triumph; and when he hath accomplished his work in mount Zion, and hath refined his silver, he will bring new vessels out of the furnace to adorn his house. I counsel you to free yourself of clogging temptations, by overcoming some, and contemning others, and watching over all; abide true and loyal to Christ: well were my soul, if I put all I have, life and soul, into his hands. If any ask how I do? I answer, None can be but well that are in Christ; and if I were not so, my sufferings had melted me away ere now. I thank my Lord, that he hath something in me, that this fire cannot consume. Remember my love to your husband, and show him from me, that I desire he may set aside all things, and make sure work of salvation, that it be not to seek when the sand-glass is run out, and time and eternity meet together.

There is no errand so weighty as this: O that he would take it to heart! Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

TO LADY KILCONQUHAIR.

Mistress,

I RECEIVED your letter. I am heartily content you are in any measure taken with the love of Jesus—faint not, but come in, and see if there be not more in Christ, than the tongue of men or angels can express. If you seek the way to heaven—the way is in him, or he is it; what you want is treasured up in Jesus, and he saith, all his are yours, even his kingdom he is content to divide with you; yea, his throne and his glory, Luke xvii. 30. John xvii. 24. Rev. iii. 21. Therefore take pains to reach that besieged mansion of Christ: devils, men, and armies of temptations are lying about it, to keep out all that are out, and it is to be won with violence. It is not a smooth and easy way, neither will your weather be fair and pleasant; but those who by faith see the invisible God, and the fair city, make no account of losses and crosses. In you must be, cost you what it will. Stand not for a price, nor for all that you have, to win that castle: the right to it is purchased for you, and is made over to you in your Lord Jesus' Testament; and see what a fair legacy your dying friend Christ hath left you, and there wanteth nothing but possession. Then get up in

the strength of the Lord, get over the water to possess that good land: it is better than a land of olives and vine-trees; for the tree of life that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month is there before you; and a pure river of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, is there. Your time is short, therefore lose no time. Gracious and faithful is he who has called you to his kingdom and glory: the city is yours by free conquest and by promise, and therefore let no deceiving idol put you from your own. The devil hath cheated the simple heir of his promise, and by enticing us to taste of the forbidden fruit, hath, as it were, brought us out of our kindly heritage; but our Lord, Christ Jesus, hath done more than subdued the devil's power, for he hath redeemed the pledge, and made the poor heir free to the inheritance. If we knew the glory of our elder Brother in heaven, we should long to be there to see him. We children think the earth a fair garden, but compared with the garden of the Lord, it is but wild, cold, barren ground; all things are fading that are here; it is our happiness to make sure of Christ to ourselves.

Thus, remembering my love to your husband, and wishing to him what I write to you, I cominit you to God's tender mercy.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 13, 1637.

To the Much-honoured and Christian **LADY GAIT-
GIRTH.**

Madam,

I LONG to hear how it goeth with you and your children. I exhort you, not to lose breath, nor to faint in your journey; the way is not so long to your home as it was; you are fast coming within reach of your glorious crown. Your Lord Jesus was sore travailed ere he got up the mount; it was he who said—"Father, save me—I am poured out like water—all my bones are out of joint—my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd." I am sure you love the way the better that his holy feet trod it before you: your Lord will not leave you to die by yourself by the way. I know you have sad hours when the Comforter is hid under the vail, and when you inquire for him and find him gone; yet, make his sweet comforts your own, and be not strange and shame-faced with Christ; he likes homely dealing with him best: when your winter-storms are over, the summer of your Lord shall come; he will do you good in your latter end. Take no heavier concern for your children, than your Lord alloweth: give them room beside your heart, but not in the yolk of your heart, where Christ should be; for then they are your idols, not your children: if your Lord take any of them home to his house before the storm come on, take it well; let our Lord pluck his own fruit at any season he pleaseth; they are not lost to

you, they are laid up and treasured in heaven, where our Lord's best jewels lie. Then be of good heart; heaven is yours, and that is a word few can say. Now the great Shepherd of the sheep, and the very God of peace, confirm and stablish you, to the day of the appearance of Christ our Lord.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

TO MR. MATTHEW MOWAT.

Reverend and dear Brother,

I AM refreshed with your letters. I would take all well at my Lord's hands, if I knew I could do my Lord any service in my suffering; for any place of trust in my Lord's house, surely I think myself (and my very dear brother, I speak not by any proud figure or trope) unworthy of it; but when I hear that the men of God are at work, and speaking in the name of our Lord Jesus, I think myself but an outcast or outlaw, chased from the city to lie on the hills, and live among the rocks and fields; but I know this is but the vapour that ariseth out of a querulous and unbelieving heart, to darken the wisdom of God. And your fault is just mine, that I cannot believe my Lord's bare and simple word; I must have a sign and a seal, a witness and caution to his word, or else I count myself loose, though I have the word and faith of a King. Oh, I am made of unbelief, and cannot swim but where my feet may touch the ground! Alas, my temptations represent

Christ to me as a deceiver! Temptations ever represent Christ unlike himself, and we in our folly listen to the tempter! If I could minister one saving word to any, how glad would my soul be! but I myself (and it is my greatest evil) often mistake the cross of Christ; for I know well, if we were wise, and bore in mind that ease destroyeth us fools, we should desire a market where we might barter our lazy ease with a profitable cross—although there be a natural variance betwixt our desires and tribulations; but some give a dear price and gold for physic, which yet they love not. But surely, brother, go he, or come he, our faithful Lord is ever gracious; and even when he goeth away, the image of that fair sun that stayeth in the eyes, senses, and heart, after he is gone, leaveth a mass of love behind it in the heart. The sound of his knock at the door of his beloved, after he is gone and past, leaveth a share of joy and sorrow both; so we have something to feed upon till his return; and he is more loved in his departure, and after he is gone, than before; as the day in the declining of the sun, and towards the evening, is often most desired. And as for Christ's cross, I never received evil of it, but what was my own making—when I misused Christ's physic, no marvel that it hurt me. It is 1600 years since Christ bore his cross, and still it keepeth the mark of him; nay, it is older than that too, for it is a long time since Abel had that same cross laid upon his shoulder; and all the saints down from him, to this very day, have known what it is. I am glad that Christ hath such a relation to this cross, and

that it is called the cross of our " Lord Jesus," Gal. vi. 14. " his reproach," Heb. xiii. 13. as if Christ would claim it as his own: if it were simple evil, as sin is, Christ, who is not the author or owner of sin, would not own it. Your excuse for your advice to me is needless: alas, many sit beside light, as sick folks beside meat, and cannot make use of it! Grace be with you.

Your brother in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

TO MR. JOHN MEINE.

Dear Brother,

I RECEIVED your letter. I cannot but testify under my own hand, that the more I know of Christ, the more cause I find to love him; and when I have said all I can, another may declare I have said nothing of him. I never knew Christ ebb or flow, wax or wane; when he seemeth to change, it is but we who turn our faces from him; I never had a plea with him in my hardest conflicts, but of my own making. Surely he hath borne with strange ways in me: you do well to fear your own backslidings. I had stood sure, if I had in my youth taken Christ for my foundation; but he that beareth his own weight to heaven, shall not fail to slip and sink. Think not that Christ will do with you in the matter of suffering, as the Pope doth in the matter of sin: Christ will neither sell a dispensation, nor give a debtor's protection against crosses—crosses are pro-

claimed as common accidents to all the saints, and in them standeth a part of our communion with Christ: but there lieth a sweet casualty to the cross, even Christ's presence and his comforts, when they are sanctified. Remember my love to your father and mother. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

To ROBERT LENNOX, of Disdove.

Worthy and dear Brother,

I FORGET you not in my bonds. I know you are looking to Christ; and I beseech you to follow after him. I can say more of Christ now by experience, (though he be infinitely above and beyond all that can be said of him,) than when I saw you. Sell, sell all things for Christ. If this whole world were in the balance, it could not weigh against Christ's love: men and angels cannot fathom it. Sir, make sure work of your salvation; build not upon sand; lay the foundation upon the rock in Zion: strive to be dead to this world, and to your own will and inclinations; let Christ have a commanding power, and a king's throne in you; walk with Christ, though the world should withstand you: I promise you Christ will win the field. Keep your garments clean, as you would walk with the Lamb clothed in white. Blessed are they who watch and keep themselves in God's love. Learn to discern the Bridegroom's voice, and to give yourself to

prayer and reading. You were often a hearer of me. I would put my heart's blood upon the doctrine I taught, as the only way of salvation; go not from it, my dear brother.—What I write to yourself, I write to your wife also. Mind heaven and Christ, and keep the spark of the love of Christ ye have already gotten: Christ shall blow on it if ye entertain it, and your end shall be peace. Sir, pray for me—(I name you to the Lord,) remember my love to Christian Murray and her daughter; I desire her, in the edge of her evening, to wait a little; the King is coming, and he hath something that she never saw with him. Heaven is no dream; “come and see” will teach her best. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 13, 1637.

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To THOMAS CORBET.

Dear Friend,

I FORGET you not. It shall be my joy that you follow after Christ till you find him. My conscience is a feast of joy to me, that I sought in singleness of heart, for Christ's love, to put you upon the king's highway to our Bridegroom, and our Father's house: thrice blessed are you, my dear brother, if you hold the way: I believe you and Christ once met. I hope you will not part from him—if you depart from what I taught you in a hair-breadth, for fear or favour of men, or desire of ease in this world, I take heaven and earth to witness, that ill

shall come upon you in the end. Awake, awake ! and make haste to seek that pearl Christ, that this world seeth not. Your night and your Master, Christ, will be upon you quickly: your hand-breadth of time is passing away. Take Christ, though a storm should follow him; though this day be not yours and Christ's, the morrow will be yours and his. I would not exchange the joy of my bonds and imprisonment for Christ, with all the joy of this poor world. I desire your wife to do what I write to you: let her remember how dear Christ will be to her when her last hour cometh. Use prayer; love not the world; be humble, and esteem little of yourself: love your enemies and pray for them; make conscience of speaking truth, when none knoweth but God. I never eat but I pray for you all. Pray for me: you and I shall see one another in our Father's house. I rejoice to hear that your eye is on Christ: follow on, hang on, and quit him not. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your affectionate Brother in our Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1636.

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To ALEXANDER GORDON, of *Earlstoun*.

Much-honoured Sir,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. I received your letter, which refreshed me. Except from your son and my brother, I have seen few letters from my acquaintance in that country, which maketh me heavy: but I have the company of a Lord who can



teach us all to be kind, and in the right way. It pleaseth him to come and visit a sad prisoner, and a solitary stranger: his spikenard casteth a perfume, yet my sweet hath some sour mixed with it, wherein I must acquiesce, for there is no reason why his comforts should be unmixed: but I verily think Christ hath led me now up to a point in Christianity that I never reached before. I think all before was but childhood and child's play. I look back to what I was before, and laugh to see the sand-houses I have built when I was a child. At first, the remembrance of the many fair feast-days with my Lord Jesus in public, which are now changed into silent Sabbaths, raised a great tempest in my soul; and the devil entered in, and tempted me to quarrel with Christ, and to lay the blame on him, as a hard master; but now these mists are blown away, and I am not only silenced as to all quarrelling, but fully satisfied. Now I wonder that any man living can laugh upon the world, or give it a hearty welcome. Christ beareth me good company; he hath eased me when I saw it not; lifting the cross off my shoulders, so that I think it to be but a feather, because underneath are the everlasting arms. Nothing breaketh my heart, but that I cannot speak of the Bridegroom's glory to the daughters of Jerusalem. I charge you, in the name of Christ, that you tell all you see of it—and yet it is above telling and understanding. Would that all the kingdom were as I am, except my bonds! They know not the love the Lord Jesus showeth to a prisoner: he hath sealed my sufferings with comforts. On my salvation this is

the only way to the new city. I write this to confirm you. I write now what I have seen as well as heard. Now and then, my silence burneth up my spirit; but Christ hath said, "Thy reward is laid up in heaven," and this from a King's mouth, rejoiceth my heart: at other times I am sad, dwelling in Kedar's tents. The Lord hath removed my brethren, and my acquaintance far from me; and it may be, I am forgotten in the place where the Lord made me the instrument to do some good: but I see this is vanity in me. Let him do with me what he pleaseth, if he bring salvation out of it to me. Sir, write to me, I beseech you. I pray you also be kind to my afflicted brother. Remember my love to your wife; and the prayer and blessing of the prisoner of Christ be on you. Frequent your meetings for prayer and communion with God, they would be sweet meetings to me.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 16, 1637.

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To ROBERT GORDON, of Knockbraz.

My dear Brother,

I AM almost wearying, yea, wondering, that you write not to me, though I know it is not forgetfulness. As for myself, I am very well, all glory to God. I was before at variance with Christ; but it was unlawful: and because his whole providence was not yea and nay to my yea and nay, and because I believed his outward look rather than his faithful pro-

mise. Yet he hath in patience waited for me till I have come to myself, and hath not taken advantage of my weak apprehensions of his goodness. Great and holy is his name! He looketh to what I desire to be, and not to what I am. Grace tried is more than grace; it is glory in its infancy. Who knoweth the truth of grace, without a trial? Oh, how little Christ getteth of us but that which he winneth (so to speak,) with much toil and pains! and how soon would faith freeze without a cross! When Christ blesseth his own crosses with a tongue, they breathe out his love, wisdom, kindness and care of us. Why should I start though my Lord's plough make deep furrows on my soul? I know he is no idle husbandman: he purposeth a crop, and would that this white, withered ground were made fertile to bear a crop for him, by whom it is so painfully dressed; and that this fallow ground were broken up! How sweet and comfortable have the thoughts of him been to me in my bonds! I have found in them a sufficient recompense of reward. Oh, my debt of praise, how weighty is it, and how far run up! Brother, I charge you before God, that you speak to others, and invite them to help me to praise; and yet, in this summer-blink, I am with the tear in my eye; for, by reason of my silence, sorrow hath filled me. My harp is hanged upon the willow-trees, because I am in a strange land.

Dear brother, you are in my heart, to live and to die with you: visit me with a letter; pray for me. Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you; and God who heareth prayer visit you, and let

it be unto you according to the prayers of your own brother and Christ's prisoner,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 1, 1637.

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*To my well-beloved and Reverend Brother,*

ROBERT BLAIR.

Reverend and dearly-beloved Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ be to you. It is no wonder, my dear brother, that ye be in heaviness for a season, and that God's will in crossing your desires and design to dwell among a people whose God is the Lord, should move you. I deny not but you have cause to inquire, what his providence speaketh to you in this; but God's directing and commanding will, can by no good logic be concluded from events of providence. Paul found many lions in his way, in those places whither the Lord sent him for the spreading of his gospel: a promise was made to his people, of the holy land, and yet many nations were in the way, fighting against and ready to kill them who had the promise, or to keep them from possessing that good land, which the Lord their God had given them. I know you have most to do with submission of spirit; but I persuade myself you have learnt, in every condition wherein you are cast, therein to be content, and to say, Good is the will of the Lord, let it be done. I believe the Lord purposeth to bring mercy out of your suffer-

ings and silence, which (I know from mine own experience) is grievous to you; but, seeing he knoweth our willing mind to serve him, our wages are running on with our God—even as some sick soldiers get their pay, when they are bed-fast, and not able to go to the field with others. “Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength,” Isaiah xlix. 5. Suffering is the better half of our ministry, howbeit the hardest; “through many afflictions we must enter the kingdom of God,”—not only by them, but through them must we go. Dear brother, refresh me with a letter from you; there are none here to whom I can speak; I dwell in Kedar’s tents. O for love to him, who is altogether lovely! that love which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown!

I remember you, and bear your name on my breast to Christ. I beseech you, forget not his afflicted prisoner. Your brother and fellow-prisoner,  
S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 7, 1637.

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To ELIZABETH KENNEDY.

Mistress,

I HAVE long had a purpose of writing to you, but I have been hindered. I heartily desire, that you would remember your country, and consider which way your soul setteth its face; for all come not home at night, who suppose they have set their faces heaven-ward. It is a woful thing to die and miss

heaven: I persuade myself that thousands shall be deceived and ashamed of their hope; because they cast their anchor in sinking sands, they must lose it. Till now, I knew not the pain, labour, nor difficulty, that there is in reaching home; nor did I understand so well before this, what that meaneth; "the righteous shall scarcely be saved." How many a mere professor's candle is blown out, and never lighted again! I see ordinary profession, and to be ranked among the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought enough to carry professors to heaven; but certainly a name is but a name, and will never endure a blast of God's storm. I counsel you, not to give your soul rest, nor your eyes sleep, till you have got something that will stand the fire and last out the storm. I know, if I had one foot in heaven, and he were to say to me, Do for thyself, I will hold thee up no longer, I should go no further, but presently fall down as dead nature. We run our souls out of breath, and tire them in galloping and coursing after our own night-dreams, (for such are the rovings of our misjudging hearts) to get some creature good thing in this life: and on this side of death, we would fain stay, and spin out a heaven to ourselves on this side the water; but sorrow, want, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill-spun web. Oh how sweet and dear are these thoughts, that are still upon the things which are above! and how happy are they who are longing to have little sand in their glass, and to have time's thread cut, and that can cry to Christ, Lord Jesus, come and fetch thy weary pil-

grim ! I wish our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. O but heaven casteth a sweet perfume afar off, to those who have spiritual senses ! God hath made many fair flowers, but the fairest are in heaven, and the flower of all flowers is Christ. Fy, fy upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houses, fair lands, fair pleasures, fair honours, and fair persons; and have so little love to Christ ! If men would have something to do with their hearts and their thoughts, that are always rolling up and down after sinful vanities, they may find great and sweet employment of their thoughts upon Christ: if those frothy, fluctuating, and restless hearts of ours, would come all about Christ, and look into his love, his bottomless love, to the depth of his mercy, to the unsearchable riches of his grace, to inquire after and search into the beauty of God in Christ; they would be swallowed up in the depth and height, length and breadth of his goodness. Oh if men would draw the curtains, and look into the inner side of the ark, and behold how the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily ! I can write no better thing to you, than to assure you, that if you will weigh Christ against every other delight, he will be found worthy of all your love.

To our Lord Jesus, and to his love, I commend you. Yours in his dear Lord Jesus,

S. R.-

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JANET KENNEDY.

Mistress,

YOU are not a little obliged to his rich grace, who hath separated you for himself, and for the promised inheritance with the saints in light, from this condemned and guilty world. Hold fast Christ—contend for him: it must be your resolution, to set your face against Satan's northern tempests and storms, for salvation. Nature would have heaven come to us sleeping in our beds. We would all buy Christ, if we might fix the price ourselves; but he is worth more blood and lives, than you or I have to give him. When we shall come home, and enter into the possession of our brother's fair kingdom, and when our heads shall feel the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pains and sufferings; then shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from a prison to glory. Oh thrice blinded souls, whose hearts are charmed and bewitched with dreams, shadows, night-vanities, and night-fancies of a miserable life of sin. Poor fools, who are beguiled with painted things, and this world's fair weather and smooth promises, and rotten hopes. May not the devil laugh, to see us give away our souls for the corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin? O for a sight of eternity's glory, and a little tasting of the Lamb's marriage-supper. How far are we bereft of wit, to chase, and hunt, and run, till our souls be out of breath, after a condemned happiness of

our own making ! O that we were out of ourselves, and dead to this world, and this world dead and crucified to us ! if we were wholly out of love and conceit of any created good whatever, then would Christ win to himself a lodging in the inmost core of our heart ; then should he be our night-song, and our morning-song—then the sound of our well-beloved's feet, when he cometh, and his knock at the door, would be as the foretaste of heaven to us ! Let my part of this poor world be forfeited for evermore, provided I may anchor my tottering soul upon Christ ! but, O Lord, can we give thee any thing for Christ ? Can Christ be sold ? or rather, may not a poor sinner have him for nothing ? Alas ! that I cannot draw souls and Christ together ! But I desire the coming of his kingdom, and that he would come into our withered hearts, as rain upon the new mown grass. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JOHN EWART, Bailie of Kirkcudbright.

My very worthy and dear Friend,

I CANNOT but most kindly thank you for the expressions of your love. I bless His high and glorious name, that the terrors of great men have not affrighted me from open avouching of the Son of God : nay, his cross is the sweetest burden that ever I bare ; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird,

or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour. I have not much cause to fall in love with the world; but rather to wish that He who sitteth upon the floods, would bring my broken ship to land, and keep my conscience safe in these dangerous times; for wrath from the Lord is coming on this sinful land. It were good that we prisoners of hope knew of our strong-hold to run to, before the storm come on: therefore, Sir, I beseech you, by the mercies of God and comforts of his Spirit—by the blood of your Saviour, and by your appearance before the sin-revenging Judge of the world, keep your garments clean, and stand for the truth of Christ, which you profess: it shall be your comfort and joy when you are summoned hence, that you give your name to Christ. The greater part of mankind think heaven is at the next door, and that Christianity is an easy task; but they will find they have been deceived. Worthy Sir, I beseech you, make sure work of salvation: I have found by experience, that all I could do was little enough, in the day of my trial; therefore lay up a sure foundation for the time to come. I cannot requite you for your undeserved favours to me and my own afflicted brother; but I trust to remember you to God. Remember me heartily to your kind wife. Yours in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 18, 1637.

To EARLSTOUN, the Younger.

Honoured and dear Brother,

Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you. I received your letter, which refreshed my soul. I thank God the cloud has passed away. I am ashamed now of my unjust doubts of Christ my Lord: verily he is God, and I am dust and ashes: when he hid his face from me, I thought it was in wrath; but I have seen the other side of his cross now. It was good for me to come to Aberdeen, to learn a new mystery of Christ, that his promise is to be believed against all appearances. Verily, I have been but a child until now; I would I could begin to be a Christian in real earnest! Come all crosses—welcome, welcome! so I may get my heart fixed on my Lord Jesus. Sir, I charge you, praise with me, and show unto others what he hath done unto my soul. This is the fruit of my sufferings, that I desire Christ's name may be spread abroad in this kingdom. Verily, we know not what an evil it is to indulge ourselves and make an idol of our will! I pray God I may never find my will again. Oh if Christ would subject my will to his, and liberate me from that lawless lord! Now, Sir, in your youth gather fast: your sun will mount to the meridian quickly, and thereafter decline; be greedy of grace. Oh but pride of youth, vanity, idolizing of the world and charming pleasures, take long time to root them out; far as ye are advanced in the way to heaven, much progress as you have made in the way of mortification, ye will find

that ye are far behind, and have most of your work before you. I never took it to be so hard to be dead to my own will, and to this world. When the day of visitation cometh, and your old idols come weeping about you, you will have much ado, not to break your heart: it is best to give them up in time, so as you could at a call quit your part of this world, as of a thing little worth. Verily, I have seen the best part of this world—I purpose now to lay it aside. Oh for my house above, not made with hands. Pray for Christ's prisoner, and write to me. Remember my love to your mother; desire her from me, to prepare for removing. The Lord's tide will not wait her; and to seek a heavenly mind, that her heart may be often there. Grace be with you.

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 20, 1637.

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To ROBERT GLENDINNING.

My dear Friend,

I THANK you most kindly for your care of me, and your love and respective kindness to my brother in his distress. I pray the Lord you may find mercy in the day of Christ; and I intreat you, Sir, to consider that your soul is more worth to you than the whole world, which in the days of the blowing of the last trumpet, shall lie in ashes. Remember that judgment and eternity are before you. My dear and worthy friend, let me intreat you in Christ's name, and by the salvation of your soul, and by your appearance before the dreadful sin-revenging Judge

of the world, make your accounts ready; read them ere you come to the water-side, for your afternoon will wear short, and your sun fall low and go down; and you know that this long time your Lord hath waited for you. O how comfortable a thing will it be to you, when time shall be no more, and your soul departs out of its house of clay, to vast and endless eternity, to have your soul prepared for its Bridegroom! No loss is comparable to the loss of the soul—there is no hope of compensating that loss. How joyful would my soul be, to hear, that you would start to the gate, and contend for the crown, and leave all vanities, and make Christ your garland! Let your soul put away your old lovers, and let Christ have your whole love. I have some experience in what I thus write to you. My witness is in heaven, I would not exchange my chains and bonds for Christ, for ten worlds' glory. I judge this clay idol, that Adam's sons are selling their souls for, not worth a drink of cold water. May-flowers, and morning-vapour, and summer-mist, pass not so fast away, as these withering pleasures that we follow after. We build castles in the air, and night-dreams are our daily idols that we dote on. Salvation, salvation, is our only one necessary thing. Sir, call home your thoughts to this work; to inquire for your well-beloved. This earth is not your portion; seek the son's inheritance, and let Christ's truth be dear to you. When you and I shall lie in the cold ground, our pleasures, that we now naturally love, shall be less than nothing. Dear brother, fulfil my joy, and betake you to Christ, without further delay:

you will be forced at length to seek to him, or do infinitely worse. Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 13, 1637.

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*To WILLIAM GLENDINNING.*

Well-beloved and dear Brother,

I THANK you most kindly for your care and love to me, and in particular to my brother, in his distress in Edinburgh. Go on through the waters without wearying: your guide knoweth the way, follow him, and cast your cares and temptations upon him, and let not worms, the sons of men, affright you; they shall die, and the moth shall consume them. There is no less at stake in this game betwixt us and the world, than our conscience and salvation; we have need to take heed to the game, and not to yield—let other things be taken from us, but here, in matters of conscience, we must hold and draw with kings, and set ourselves in terms of opposition with the shields of the earth. Remember my hearty kindness to your wife; I desire her to believe, and lay her cares on God, and make fast work of salvation. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus.

S. R.

Aberdeen, March, 13, 1637.

*To JEAN BROWN.*

Well-beloved and dear Sister,

I RECEIVED your letter, which I esteem an evidence of your Christian affection to me, and of your love to my honourable Lord and Master. My desire is, that your communion with Christ may grow. Let this be your desire, and let your thoughts dwell much upon that blessedness that abideth you in the other world. The fair side of the world will be turned to you quickly, when you shall see the crown—I hope you are near your lodging. O but I would think myself blessed for my part, might I reach the house before the shower comes on! You have the prayers of a prisoner of Christ. I desire Patrick to give Christ his young love, even the flowers of it, and to put away all others: it were good to start soon to the way; he should thereby have a great advantage in the evil day. Grace be with you.

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 7, 1637.

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*To his loving Friend, JOHN HENDERSON.*

Loving Friend,

CONTINUE in the love of Christ, and the doctrine which I taught you faithfully and painfully, according to my measure. I am free of your blood. Fear the dreadful name of God—keep in mind the examinations that I taught you, and love the truth

of God. Death, as fast as time fleeth, chaseth you out of this life; it is possible you may make your reckoning with your Judge, before I see you: let salvation be your care night and day, and set aside hours and times of the day for prayer. I rejoice to hear that there is prayer in your house. See that your servants keep the Lord's day. This clay idol, I mean the vain world, is not worth the seeking. What I write to you, I write to your wife. Commend me heartily to her. The grace of God be with you. Your loving Friend and Pastor.

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 14, 1637.

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To LADY ROBERTLAND.

Madam,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with you. I shall be glad to hear that your soul prospereth, and that fruit groweth upon you, after the Lord's husbandry and pains in his rod, that hath not been a stranger to you from your youth. It is the Lord's kindness that he will clear us from our dross in the fire, who knoweth how needful winnowing is for him, and how much of his dross he must lose, ere he can enter the kingdom of God. So narrow is the entry to heaven, that our knots and bunches of pride, and self-love, and idol-love, and world-love, must be hammered off us, that we may press in, stooping low, and creeping through that narrow, thorny entry. And now for myself: I find it the most sweet and heavenly life, to pitch my tent upon Christ's foundation-stone, which

is sure and faithful ground. I thank God, because he has taught me in my wilderness not to divide Christ, nor intermix him with creature vanities, nor to spin his sweet love in one thread with the world and the things thereof. And yet I am but training on to love him, and my soul hungers to feed more abundantly upon him: but our meat doth us the more good, that Christ keepeth the keys, and that the wind and the air of his sweet breathing, and of the influence of his Spirit is locked up in the hands of the good pleasure of him who bloweth where he listeth. I see there is a sort of impatient patience required in the want of Christ as to his manifestations to the soul; they thrive who wait on his love, and the blowing of it, and catch the turning of the precious gale; and they thrive who, though waiting, make haste, and strive, and seek diligently for their lost and hidden Lord Jesus. However it be, God feed me with him, any way. He hath a way of his own, beyond the thoughts of men, that no foot hath skill to follow him: but we are still bad scholars, and will go in at heaven's gates with only half our lesson learned, and will be children as long as we are under time's hands, and till eternity cause a sun to arise in our souls, to enlighten our understandings. On this side of the new Jerusalem we shall still have need of forgiving and healing. Lord, do any thing that may perfect thy Father's image in us, and make us meet for glory. Pray for me, (I forget not you) that our Lord would be pleased to give me opportunity to preach his righteousness, and tell what I

have heard and seen of him. Grace, grace be with you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Jan. 4, 1637.

To LADY ROWALLAN.

Madam,

THOUGH not acquainted, I am bold in Christ to speak to your Ladyship on paper. I rejoice in our Lord Jesus on your behalf, that it hath pleased him (whose love to you is as old as himself,) to manifest the savour of his love in Christ Jesus to your soul, in the revelation of his will and mind to you, while so many are shut up in unbelief. You have made a sweet change in leaving the black kingdom of this world and sin, and coming over to our Bridegroom's new kingdom, to know and to be taken with the love of the Son of God. I beseech you, Madam, in the Lord, make now sure work, and see that the new building of your soul be of Christ's own laying; for then the wind and storm shall neither loose it, nor shake it asunder. Many now take Christ by guess: therefore, I say, be sure that you take Christ himself, and take him with his Father's blessing. His sweet working in the soul will not lie: it will soon tell whether it be Christ indeed whom you have met with (and I think your love to the saints speaketh that it is he). Your lines are well fallen: it could not have been better, nor so well with you, if they had not fallen in these places. In heaven, or out of heaven, there is nothing better, nothing so sweet

and excellent, as that which you have found; therefore hold fast to Christ, and much joy may you have in him. But take his cross with himself cheerfully: Christ and his cross are not separable in this life, howbeit they part at heaven's door, for there is no room for crosses in heaven; not one tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, or thought of trouble can find lodging there; they are but the marks of our Lord Jesus down in this stormy country, on this side death: sorrow and the saints are not married together, or suppose it were so, heaven will make a divorce. I find his sweet presence eateth out the bitterness of sorrow and suffering. I think it a sweet thing that Christ divides my sufferings with me, and taketh the largest share to himself. What a portion is Christ! O, that the saints would dig deeper into the treasures of his wisdom and excellency! Thus recommending your Ladyship to the good-will and tender mercies of our Lord, I rest,

Your Ladyship's in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

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To ROBERT GORDON, of Knockbren.

My very worthy and dear Friend,

I SHOULD have expected a letter from you ere now, though all Galloway beside should have forgotten me: but I will not expound your silence to be forgetfulness of me. Now, my dear brother, I cannot show you how matters go betwixt Christ and me. I find my Lord going and coming seven times

a day; his visits are short, but they are both frequent and sweet. I dare not say that I am a dry tree, or that I have no room at all in the vineyard; but yet I often think that the sparrows are blessed, who may resort to the house of God in Anwoth, from which I am banished. Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken dead, rise again, and revive upon me; yea, I see that while I live, temptations will not die: yet I will not believe that Christ would have done so much for me, and taken such pains to have me to himself as he hath done, if he meant not to keep possession of me. I see that now which I never saw well before: 1st, I see the necessity of faith is never known aright in a fair day—but now I miss nothing so much as faith. Faint and hungry, I run to the fair and sweet promises; but when I come, I am like one stupified with cold under water, that would fain come to land, but cannot lay hold of any thing that is cast to him: I can let Christ take hold of me, but I cannot lay hold on him—for afflictions cramp my faith. O, what would I give to have my claim made good with real possession! 2d, I see mortification, and to be crucified to the world, is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be: how heavenly a thing is it to be deaf and dead to this world's sweet music! As I am at present, I would scorn to buy this world's kindness, with a bow of my knee. I scarce now either hear or see what it is that this world offereth me: I know it is little it can take from me, and as little it can give me. I recommend mortification to you above any thing: for alas! we but chase feathers flying in the air, and tire our

own spirits for the froth and vapour of a dying life: One sight of what my Lord hath let me see within this short time, is worth a world of worlds. 3d, I thought courage in the time of trouble for Christ's sake, would be a thing easily had: I thought the very remembrance of the excellency of the cause would be enough; but I was a fool in so thinking. I see joy groweth up in heaven, and is above our short reach; Christ will be the steward and dispenser of it himself, and none else but he: therefore, now I count much of the least spiritual joy; yet truly I have no cause to say that the consolations of Christ are dried up, for he hath poured down refreshing showers upon my dry wilderness to my admiration. Praise, praise with me. Remember my love to your brother, to your wife, and to G. M. desire him to be faithful, and to repent of his hypocrisy; and say that I wrote it to you. I wish him salvation. Write to me. The prisoner's prayers and blessings come upon you. Grace be with you. Yours,  
S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 9, 1637.

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*To my very Dear Brother, WILLIAM LIVING-  
STON.*

My very dear Brother,

I REJOICE to hear that Christ hath got possession of your young love, and that you are so early in the morning matched with such a Lord. Be humble and thankful for grace, and look not so much to its weight, as whether it be true. Christ will not

quench your smoking flax; he never yet extinguished the feeblest flame that was kindled at the Sun of Righteousness. I recommend to you, prayer and watching over the sins of your youth: Satan hath a friend at court in the heart of youth; and there pride, luxury, lust, revenge, forgetfulness of God, are his hired agents. Happy is your soul, if Christ keepeth house, and command all within. Keep him, and entertain him well; cherish his grace, and let him direct you in all things. Now for myself: know I am fully agreed with my Lord; I reign as a king over my crosses; I will not yield to a temptation nor give place to the devil. Praise God with me, and let us exalt his name together,

Your Brother in Christ,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March, 13, 1637.

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To GEORGE GILLESPIE.

Reverend and dear Brother,

I RECEIVED your letter. As for my case, brother, I bless his glorious name, my losses are my gain, my prison a palace, and my sadness joyfulness. At my first coming, my apprehensions wrought so upon my cross, that I became doubtful of the love of Christ, as being by him thrust out of the vineyard, and I was under great misgivings of mind (as ordinarily melted gold casteth first its dross, and Satan and our own corruptions form the first words the cross speaketh, and say, God is angry, he loveth you not;) but our apprehensions are not well founded,

they speak falsely of God and Christ's love. But since my spirit was settled, and the clay fallen to the bottom of the well, I see better what Christ was doing; and now my Lord is returned with salvation under his wings, and I see not how to be thankful enough, or sufficiently praise that royal King, who raiseth up those that are bowed down: therefore let no man shrink from Christ's cross, for he beareth both the sufferer and it. I see that Christ can triumph in a weaker man than I; yet who can be more weak? But his grace is sufficient for me. Brother, pray for me, and let me know your case. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 13, 1637.

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To JOHN FLEMING, *Baillie of Leith.*

Worthy and dearly-beloved in the Lord,

I RECEIVED your letter, and wish I could satisfy your desires, in drawing up, and framing for you a Christian Directory, but the learned have done it before me, more judiciously than I can; especially Messrs. Rodgers, Greenham, and Perkins: notwithstanding, I will show you what I would have done myself, (though, alas! I always come short of my purpose) 1st, That some hours of the day, less or more, be given to God, for the reading the word, and prayer, not sparing the twelfth hour, or mid-day; howbeit, it should then be the shorter time. 2d, That in the midst of worldly employments,

there should be some thoughts of sin, judgment, death, and eternity, with a word or two of ejaculatory prayer, at least, to God. 3d, To beware of wandering of heart in private prayer. 4th, Not to be discouraged though you come from prayer without sense of joy: down-casting, sense of guiltiness, and hunger, is often best for us. 5th, That the Lord's day, from morning to night, be spent always either in public or private worship. 6th, That words be observed, wandering and idle thoughts be avoided, sudden anger and desire of revenge, even of such as persecute the truth, be guarded against: for we often mix our zeal with our own wild-fire. 7th, That known, discovered, and acknowledged sins, that are against the conscience, be eschewed, as most dangerous preparatives to hardness of heart. 8th, That in dealing with men, faith and truth in covenants and trafficking be regarded; that we deal with all men in sincerity; that conscience be made of idle and lying words; and that our carriage be such as that they who see it may speak honourably of our Master and profession. 9th, I have been much challenged by conscience, 1. For not referring all to God, as the last end: that I do not eat, drink, sleep, journey, speak, and think for God. 2. That I have not benefited by good company: and that I left not some word of conviction, even upon natural and wicked men; as, by reproving swearing in them, or that I have been a silent witness to their loose carriage; and aimed not in all companies to do good. 3. That the woes and calamities of my fellow-creatures, and particularly of the brethren,



have not sufficiently moved me. 4. That at the reading of the lives of David, Paul, and such characters, I was not more humbled, and, coming so far short of their holiness, laboured not to imitate them, afar off at least, and according to the measure of God's grace. 5. That unrepented sins of youth were not looked to, and lamented for. 6. That sudden stirrings of pride, anger, revenge, love of honours, &c. were not resisted and mourned for. 7. That my charity was cold. 8. That having had experience of God's hearing me in this and the other particular, yet, in a new trouble, I had always (at first at least) my faith to seek, as if I were to begin to A, B, C, again. 9. That I have not more boldly contradicted the enemies' speaking against the truth, either in public or social, or ordinary conferences. 10. That in great troubles, I have admitted false thoughts of Christ's love, and misinterpreted his chastenings; whereas the event hath said all was in mercy. 11. Nothing more moveth me and weighteth my soul, than that I could never from my heart, in my prosperity, so wrestle in prayer with God, nor be so dead to the world, nor so hunger for communion with Christ, as when the weight of a heavy cross was upon me. 12. That the cross extorted vows of new obedience, which ease hath blown away as chaff before the wind. 13. That practice was so short and narrow, and light so long and broad. 14. That death hath not been often meditated upon. 15. That I have not been careful of gaining others to Christ. 16. That my grace and gifts bring forth little or no thankfulness.

There are some things also, whereby I have been helped, as, 1st, I have benefited in riding alone a long journey, by giving that time to prayer. 2d, By abstinence, and giving days to God. 3d, By praying for others; for, by making an errand to God for them, I have gotten something for myself. 4th, I have been really made sure, in many particulars, that God heareth prayer; and therefore I used to pray for every thing, of how little importance soever. 5th, He enables me to make no question that this despised way is the way to heaven.

Sir, These, and many other occurrences of my life, should be looked into: and, 1st, Thoughts of atheism should be watched over; such as, *if* there be a God in heaven; which will trouble and assault the best at some times. 2d, Growth in grace should be sought for above all things; and falling from our first love mourned for. 3d, Conscience made of praying for the enemies who are blinded.

Sir, I thank you most kindly for your care of my brother and me also: I hope it is laid up for you, and remembered in heaven. Help me to praise, and pray for me; for you have a prisoner's blessing and prayers. Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you. Yours in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 15, 1637.

**TO MR. WILLIAM DALGLEISH.**

Reverend and well-beloved Brother,

GRACE, mercy and peace be unto you. Let me entreat you, my dearly-beloved, to hold fast to Christ. My witness is above, my dearest brother, that you have added much joy to me in my bonds, when I hear that you grow in the grace and zeal of God for your Master. Our ministry, whether by preaching or suffering, will cast a savour through the world, both of life and death. I persuade you, my dear brother, there is nothing out of heaven, next to Christ, dearer to me than my ministry: and the worth of it, in my estimation, is swelled, and paineth me exceedingly; yet I am content, for the honour of my Lord, to surrender it back again to the Lord of the vineyard. Let him do with it, and me both, what seemeth him good. I think myself too little for him; and let me speak to you of Christ's kindness to a poor prisoner. Believe me, this kind of cross is still the longer the more welcome to me. It is true, my silent sabbaths have been, and still are, glassy ice, whereon my faith can scarce hold its feet, and I am often blown back with a storm of doubting: yet truly my bonds all this time are perfumed with the deep love of Christ. I cannot see through to the end of my cross; yet I believe I am in Christ's books, and in his decree (not yet unfolded to me) a man triumphing, and singing, and praising the Lamb, over on the other side of the Red Sea, beyond time, sorrow, deprivation, losses, want of

friends, and death. Wo is me, my dear brother, that I say often I am but dry bones, which my Lord will not bring out of the grave again; and that my faithless fears say, I am a dry tree, that can bear no fruit. Christ's love will not wrong me; but there is a tricking and false heart within me, that still leads me to doubt him. It is sometimes hard to me to make sure of Christ's love; because my faith is sick, and my hope withereth, and my eyes wax dim; and unkind and comfort-eclipsing clouds go over the fair and bright Sun of Righteousness: and then, when I and temptations meet, we lose all through unbelief. Sweet, sweet would be my life for evermore, if I could keep faith in exercise; but I see my fire cannot always cast light. Yet surely, since my entry hither, many a time hath my fair Sun shined without a cloud. If my sufferings could do beholders good, and edify his church, and proclaim the incomparable worth of Christ's love to the world, O then would my soul be overjoyed, and my sad heart cheered and calmed!

Dear brother, I cannot tell what has become of my labours among my people, if all that the Lord built by me be cast down, and none stand by Christ, whose love I once preached as clearly and as plainly as I could, though far below its excellency and worth. If so, how can I bear it! But I know "his ways are past finding out." Yet my witness both within me and above me, knoweth my desire to have had Christ awful and amiable, and sweet to that people, is now my joy; and it was my desire and aim to have made Christ and them one. If I see

my hopes die in the bud, ere they have bloomed a little, and come to no fruit, I die with grief: but my Lord Jesus hath many ways to recover his own losses, and is irresistible to compass his own glorious ends, that his lily may grow among thorns, and his little kingdom exalt itself. But, my dear brother, go on in the strength of his rich grace whom ye serve: let us make our part good, that it may be able to abide the fire when hay and stubble shall be burnt to ashes. Nothing, nothing—I say, nothing but sound sanctification can abide the Lord's fan.

Now, remember my love to all my friends, and to my parishioners, as if I named each one of them particularly. I recommend you, and God's people, committed by Christ to your trust, to the rich grace of our all-sufficient Lord. Remember my bonds: praise the Lord, who beareth me up in my sufferings. As you find occasion, according to the wisdom given you, show our acquaintance what the Lord hath done for my soul. This I seek not, verily, to hunt my own praise, but that my dearest Master may be magnified. I rest, your brother in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 17, 1637.

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*To* MARION MACNAUGHT.

Dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you. Few know the heart of a stranger and a prisoner: I am in the hands of mine enemies. I would honest and lawful means were essayed for bringing me home to my

charge; but, however it be, I wait for the Lord. Lord give me submission to wait on! my heart is sad, that my days flee away, and I do no service to my Lord in his house, now when his harvest, and the souls of poor perishing people, require it; but his ways are not like my ways, neither can I find him out. O that he would shine upon my darkness, and bring forth my morning light from under the thick cloud that is spread over me! That day that my mouth was closed, the bloom fell off my branches, and my joy did cast the flower. Howbeit, I have been casting myself under Christ's feet, and wrestling to believe: yet my fainting cometh before I eat, and my faith hath bowed under this almost insupportable weight: O that it break not! I dare not say that the Lord hath put out my candle, and broken the stakes of my tabernacle; but I have tasted bitterness, and eaten gall and wormwood, since that day my Master laid bonds upon me, to speak no more. I speak not this because the Lord is unkind to me, but because beholders on dry land see not my sea storm; the witnesses of my cross are but strangers to my sad days and nights. O that Christ would come home to me, and bring summer with him! that I might preach his beauty and glory as once I did, before my clay-tent be removed to darkness; that my branches might be watered with the dew of God, and my joy in his work might grow green again, and bud and send out a flower! But I am a short-sighted creature, and my candle easteth not light afar off: he knoweth all that is done to me; how that when I had but one joy and no more, and

one green flower that I esteemed to be my garland, he came in one hour, and dried up my flower at the root, and took away mine only crown and garland. What can I say? Surely my guiltiness hath been remembered before him, and he was seeking to take down my sails, and to let my vessel lie on the coast, like an old broken ship that is no more for the sea: but I praise him for this stroke, I welcome this furnace; God's wisdom made choice of it for me, and it must be best, because it was his choice. O that I may wait for him till the morning break out! I know that he will make his light to shine forth again. May I set down my desires where my Lord biddeth me.

Remember my love in the Lord to your husband; God make him faithful to Christ: and my blessing to your three children. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To JOHN GORDON, at Rusco.*

Dear Brother,

I EARNESTLY desire to know the state of your soul, and to understand that you have made sure work of heaven and salvation. Remember, 1st, That salvation is Christ's best gift, and he giveth it not to all. 2d, That it is violent striving that taketh heaven. 3d, That it cost Christ's blood to purchase that mansion for sinners. 4th, That many make a start towards heaven, who fall back, and reach not

the top of the mount. 5th, Remember, That many go far on, and reform many things, and can find tears, as Esau did; and suffer hunger for truth, as Judas did; and wish and desire the end of the righteous, as Balaam did; and profess fair, and fight for the Lord, as Saul did; and desire the saints of God to pray for them, as Pharaoh and Simon Magus did; and prophesy and speak of Christ, as Caiaphas did; and walk softly, and mourn for fear of judgments, as Ahab did; and put away gross sins and idolatry, as Jehu did; and hear the word of God gladly, and reform their life in many things, according to the word, as Herod did; and say, "Master," to Christ, "I will follow thee whither thou goest," as the man who offered to be Christ's servant did, (Matt. viii.) and may taste of the virtues of the life to come, and be partakers of the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, and taste of the good word of God, as the apostates who sin against the Holy Ghost, (Heb. vi.)—and yet all these are but like gold in sound and colour, they are but watered brass and base metal. These are written, that we should try ourselves, and not rest, till we be a step nearer Christ, than mere professors can come. 6th, Consider it is impossible that your idol-sins and you can go to heaven together; and that they who will not part with these, cannot love Christ in deed and heart, but only in word and show, which will not do the business. 7th, Remember how swiftly time flieth away; your forenoon is already spent; your afternoon will come, and then your evening, and at last night, when you cannot see to work: let your heart be set upon finish-



ing your journey, and making up your accounts with your Lord. Oh, how blessed shall you be, to have a joyful welcome from your Lord at night! How blessed are they, who in time take sure course with their souls! Bless his great name, for what you possess in goods and children, ease and worldly contentment, that he hath given you; and seek to be like Christ, in humility and lowliness of mind; and be not great and entire with the world: make it not your God, nor your lover, that ye trust unto, for it will deceive you. I recommend Christ and his love to you in all things; let him have the flower of your heart and your love; set a low price upon all things but him, for none else will comfort you, when your summons comes to remove, and appear before your Judge, to answer for all the deeds done in the body. The Lord give you wisdom in all things: I beseech you sanctify God in your speaking, for holy and reverend is his name, and be temperate and sober. Read this letter to your wife, and remember my love to her, and request her to take heed to do what I write to you. I pray for you and yours. Remember me in your prayers to our Lord, that he would be pleased to send me amongst you again. Grace be with you. Your loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

## To LADY LARGIRIE.

Mistress,

GRACE, merey, and peace be with you. I exhort you, in the Lord, to go on in your journey to heaven, and to be content with such fare by the way as Christ and his followers have had before you. The Lord hath not changed the way to us for our ease, but will have us following our blessed Guide. Alas! how doth sin clog us in our journey, and retard us! What fools are we to have a by-good, or any other love, or to match our souls to any one but Christ! It were best for us to seek our own home, and to sell our hopes of this little clay-idol of the earth, where we are neither well-summered, nor well-wintered. O that our souls would so account of this world's delights, as a traveller doth of a draught of water, which is not any part of his treasure, but only a passing refreshment; ten miles farther journey maketh that drink to him as nothing! O that we had as soon done with this world, and could as quickly despatch the love of it! We cannot entertain two loves: blessed were we, if we could make ourselves masters of that invaluable treasure, the love of Christ; or rather suffer ourselves to be mastered and subdued by Christ's love, so as Christ were all things to us, and all other things nothing. Death is the last thief, that shall come, without noise of feet, and take our souls away; and we shall take our leave of time, and face eternity; and our Lord shall lay together the two sides of this

earthly tabernacle, and fold it, and lay it by, and put the one half of us in the dark grave, and the other half of us in heaven or hell. Seek to be found of your Lord in peace, and put your soul in order; for Christ will not add one grain to the appointed time of our little sand-glass. Pray that he would be pleased to bring me amongst you again, freighted and laden with the blessing of his Gospel. Grace, grace, be with you. Yours, in his only Lord and Master.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To the LAIRD OF CALLY.*

Much-honoured Sir,

I LONG to hear how your soul prospereth: I have confidence that your soul mindeth Christ and salvation. I beseech you, in the Lord, give more pains and diligence to fetch heaven, than those lazy professors, who think their own faith, and their own godliness, because it is their own, the best; and content themselves with a formal custom and course, with a resolution to summer and winter in that sort of profession that the multitude and the times favour most. This is the compass they sail towards heaven by, instead of a better. Worthy and dear Sir, separate yourself from such, and bend yourself, to the utmost of your strength and breath, in running fast for salvation; and, in taking Christ's kingdom, use violence. It cost Christ, and all his followers, much toil ere they reached the top of the mountain; but still, our

soft nature would have heaven coming to our bedside, when we are sleeping. O how loath are we to forego our weights and burdens, that hinder us to run our race with patience! It is no easy task to displease and offend nature, that we may please God! It is hard to win one foot, or half an inch, out of our own will, our own wit, our own ease, and worldly lusts; and so to deny ourselves, and to say, It is not I, but Christ; not I, but grace; not I, but God's glory; not I, but God's love constraining me; not I, but the Lord's word; not I, but Christ's commanding power. And what pains, and what a death it is to nature, to exchange me, myself, my will, my ease, my credit, for my Lord, my Saviour, my King, my God, my Lord's will, my Lord's grace! Alas! that idol, MYSELF, is the master-idol we all bow to! What made Eve disobey, and what hurried her headlong upon the forbidden fruit, but that wretched thing, herself? What drew that brother-murderer to kill Abel?—that wild HIMSELF. What drove the old world on to corrupt their way?—who but themselves, and their own pleasure? What was the cause of Solomon's falling into idolátry, and multiplying of strange wives?—what but himself, whom he would rather please than God? What led Peter on to deny his Lord?—was it not self-love, and desire of self-preservation? What made Judas sell his master for thirty pieces of money, but self-love—idolizing avaricious self? What made Demas to go off the way of the Gospel, to embrace this present world? Even self-love, desire of gain for himself. Every man blameth the devil for his sins; but the

great devil, the house-devil of every man, that lieth and eateth in every man's bosom, is that idol that killeth all, himself. Blessed are they who can deny themselves, and put Christ in the room of themselves. O sweet word! (Gal. ii. 10.) "I live no more, but Christ liveth in me!" Dear Sir, I know you will be looking back to your old self, the self-idol that you set up, in the pride of youth, above Christ. Worthy Sir, pardon this my freedom of love. God is my witness, that it is out of an earnest desire after your soul's eternal welfare, that I use this freedom of speech. Your sun, I know, is lower, and your sun-setting and evening sky nearer, than when I saw you last: strive to end your task before night, and to make Christ yourself, and to acquaint your heart and your love with the Lord. Sir, I remember you in my prayers to the Lord, according to my promise: help me with your prayers, that our Lord would be pleased to bring me amongst you again, with the Gospel of Christ. Grace, grace, be with you. Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To JOHN GORDON, Younger of Cardoness.*

Dearly-beloved in the Lord,

I LONG exceedingly to hear of the case of your soul, which hath a large share both of my prayers and careful thoughts. Sir, remember that a precious treasure and prize is upon this short play that

above all created thoughts: "All nations before him, are as nothing, and less than nothing; he sitteth in the circuit of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him!" O that men would praise him! You complain of your private case. Alas! I am not the man to speak to such a one as you are; yet I know that any enjoyment that I have had of his presence, since I came here, is for this cause, That I might express and make it known to others; but I never find myself nearer Christ, than after a great weight and sense of deadness and gracelessness. I think the sense of our wants, when withal we have a restlessness, and a sort of spiritual impatience under them, and are urgent, because we want Him whom our soul loveth, is that which maketh an open door to Christ; and when we think we are going backwards, because we feel deadness, we are really going forward; for the more sense the more life, and no sense argueth no life. There is no sweeter fellowship with Christ, than to bring our wants to him. For your complaints of your ministry, I now think all I did too little: plainness, freedom, watchfulness, fidelity, shall swell upon you in exceeding large comforts, in your sufferings; the feeding of Christ's lambs in private visitations and catechising, in painful preaching, and fair, honest, and free warning of the flock, is a sufferer's garland. Ten thousand times blessed are they, who are honoured of Christ to be faithful and painful in wooing souls to Christ! My dear brother, I know you think more on this than I can; and I rejoice that your purpose is, in

the Lord's strength, to stand by Christ, now that so many are denying him, as fearing that Christ cannot do for himself and them, Our Master is not far off: O, if we could wait on him and be faithful! The good-will of Him who dwelt in the bush, the tender favour and love, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you. Help me with your prayers.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Aug. 15, 1637.

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To CARDONESS, *Senior*.

Much-honoured Sir,

I HAVE longed to hear from you, and to know the estate of your soul. I beseech you, Sir, by the salvation of your precious soul, and the mercies of God, make good and sure work of your salvation, and try upon what ground-stone you have builded. Worthy and dear Sir, if ye be upon a sinking sand, a storm of death will loose Christ and you, and wash you off the rock. O, for the Lord's sake, look narrowly to the work! Read over your life with the light of God's day and sun; for salvation is not found at every man's door. It is good to look to your compass, and all you have need of, ere ye take shipping; for no wind can blow you back again. Remember, when the race is ended, and the play either won or lost, and you are in the utmost circle and border of time, and your foot within the bounds of eternity, and all your good things of this short night-dream shall seem to you like the ashes of a

blaze of thorns or straw; then shall your soul be more glad of one smile from your Lord, than if you had gained this whole world for eternity. Let pleasures and gain, will and desires of this world, be put over in God's hands, as things that you may not meddle with. Now, when you are drinking the grounds of your cup, and are upon the utmost ends of the last links of time, and old age, like death's long shadow, is casting a covering upon your days, it is no time to court this vain life, and to set love and heart upon it: the night is at hand; seek rest and ease for your soul in God, through Christ. Believe me, I find it hard wrestling to keep love to Christ, in integrity and life, and to keep a constant course of sound and solid daily communion with Christ; temptations are daily breaking the thread of that course, and it is not easy to cast a knot again, and many knots make evil work. O how fair have many ships been plying before the wind, that, in an hour's space, have been lying in the sea-bottom!—how many professors cast a golden lustre, as if they were pure gold, and yet are, under that skin and cover, but base and reprobate metal!—and how many keep breath in their race many miles, and yet come short of the prize and the garland! Dear Sir, my soul would mourn in secret for you, if I knew your case with God to be but false-work: desire to have you anchored upon Christ, maketh me fear your tottering and slips: false under-water, not seen in the ground of an enlightend conscience, is dangerous; so is often failing and sinning against light. Know this, that those who never had sick



nights nor days in conscience for sin, can but have such a peace with God, as will break, and end in a sad war at death. Dear Sir, I ever saw nature mighty, lofty, heady, and strong, in you; and it was more for you to be mortified and dead to the world, than to another ordinary man: you will take a low ebb, and a deep cut, and a long lance, to go to the bottom of your wounds, in saving humiliation, to make you a won prey for Christ. Be humbled, walk softly; down, down, for God's sake, my dear brother, with your top-sail: stoop, stoop, it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gates: there is infinite justice in the party you have to do with; it is his nature not to acquit the guilty and the sinner; the law of God will not abate one farthing of its due—every man must pay, either in his own person, (may the Lord save you from that payment,) or by his surety, Christ. It is violence to corrupt nature for a man to be holy, to lie down under Christ's feet, to quit will, pleasure, worldly love, earthly hope, and a hankering of heart after this over-gilded world, and to be content that Christ trample upon all. Come in, come in to Christ, and see what you want, and find it in him. I dare avouch, you will be dearly welcome to him. You will find *him* the readiest way to be relieved of all your burdens. My soul would be glad to share in the joy you would have in him. The tongues of men and of angels could not tell you enough of his beauty and sufficiency. I desire your children to seek this Lord: desire them, from me, to be requested, for Christ's sake, to be blessed and happy, and come and take Christ, and

and all things with him: let them beware of glassy and slippery youth, of foolish young notions, of worldly lusts, of deceivable gain, of wicked company, of cursing, lying, blaspheming, and foolish talking: let them be filled with the Spirit, acquaint themselves with daily praying, and with the storehouse of wisdom and comfort, the good word of God. Pray for me, the prisoner of hope—I pray for you without ceasing. I write my blessing, earnest prayers, the love of God, and the sweet presence of Christ, to you and yours. Grace be with you.

Your loving Pastor,  
S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To JEAN BROWN.*

Mistress,

I LONG to hear how your soul prospereth. I earnestly hope you are going on towards your country: I know you see that your day melteth away, by little and little, and that, in a short time, ye will be beyond time's bounds; for life is a post that standeth not still, and our joys here are born weeping, rather than laughing, and they die weeping. Sin, sin, this body of sin and corruption, imbitters and poisons all our enjoyments. O that I were where I shall sin no more! and freed from these chains and iron fetters that we carry about with us! Lord, loose the sad prisoners! Who, of the children of God, have not cause to say, that they are weary of this vain life, and long, like a sick man, to

go to bed, and enjoy rest ! Glad may their souls be that are safe over the water, Christ having paid their passage : happy are they that have passed their hard and wearisome time of apprenticeship, and are now freemen and citizens in that joyful high city, the new Jerusalem. Alas ! that we should rejoice and be glad of our fetters, and our prison-house, and a life of sin, when we are absent from our Lord, and so far from our home ! Could we turn our affections from these day-dreams, these shadows, and worldly vanities, we might oftener see what they are doing in heaven, and our hearts be more frequently upon our sweet treasure above. I know no obligation the saints have to this world, seeing we fare but upon the smoke of it : all our part of the table is scarce worth a drink of water ; and, when we are stricken, we dare not weep, but steal our grief away betwixt our Lord and us, and content ourselves with stolen sorrow in secret. God be thanked, that so many things are against us, that we may pray to God to take us to our Father's house, which now is made, in Christ, our kindly heritage. O then, let us pull up the stakes of our tent, and be moving towards our true home ; for here we have no continuing city. Pray for me, that our Lord would be pleased to give me house-room. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

TO ROBERT STEWART.

My very dear Brother,

YOU are heartily welcome to my world of suffering, and heartily welcome to my Father's house; God give you much joy of your new Master. If I have been in the house before you, I were not faithful to give the house an ill name, or to speak evil of the Lord of the family: I rather wish, for God's Holy Spirit, (O Lord, breathe upon me with that Spirit!) to tell you the fashions of the house. One thing I can say, that, by patiently waiting, you will grow into favour with the Lord of the house: wait on, till you get some good from Christ; ease yourself, and let him bear all; lay all your weights and your burdens, by faith, on Christ; he can, he will bear you. I rejoice that he hath come, and hath chosen you in the furnace; it was even there that he appointed to meet you: he keepeth the good old way with you that was in Hosea's days (Hos. ii. 14.) "Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her to the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her." There was no talking to her heart while she was in the fair flourishing city, and at ease; but out in the cold, hungry, waste wilderness, he allureth her; he whispered news into her ear there, and said—"Thou art mine." You have gotten a great advantage in the way to heaven, that you have started to the gate in the morning: like a fool as I was, I suffered my sun to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon, before ever I took the right road. I pray you now,

keep the advantage you have. Be not slothful, my heart: set quickly up the mount, on hands and feet, as if the last grain of sand were running out of your glass, and death were coming to turn the glass: and be very careful to take heed to your feet in that slippery and dangerous way of youth that you are walking in. Be covetous and greedy of the grace of God; and beware that it be not holiness that cometh only from the cross: for too many are that way disposed: "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues." It is a part of our hypocrisy to promise fair for God while we are in a strait, and till we get to the open fields again. Try well your young godliness, and examine what it is you love in Christ. Make no trifling work of it; but labour for a sound and lively sight of sin, that you may judge yourself an undone man, one dying in his own blood, except Christ take compassion on you, and take you up; and, therefore, make sure and fast work of conversion. Cast the earth deep; and down, down with the old work, the building of confusion, that was there before; and let Christ lay new work, and make a new creature within you. Look if this rain goeth down to the root of your withered plants, and if his love wound your heart till it bleeds with sorrow for sin: I know Christ will not be hid where he is; grace will ever speak for itself, and be fruitful in well-doing: the sanctified cross is a fruitful tree. If I should tell you, from some weak experience, what

I have found in Christ, you or others would hardly believe me. I thought not the hundredth part of Christ, long since, that I do now; though, alas, my thoughts are still infinitely below his worth. I have his faith, and truth, and promise, all engaged, that I shall obtain that for which I hunger, and I esteem that the choice of my happiness; and for Christ's cross, especially that best of crosses, to suffer for his name's sake, I esteem it more that I can speak or write unto you. The more heavily crossed the soul is, it is still the lighter for the journey. Now, would to God all cold-blooded, faint-hearted soldiers of Christ, would look again to Jesus, and to his love; and, when they look, I would have them to look again and again, and fill themselves with beholding Christ's beauty: and, I dare say, then he would be highly esteemed of many. It is my daily growing sorrow, that he doth so great things for my soul, and he never yet got any thing of me worth speaking of. Sir, I charge you, help me to praise him. If men could do no more, I would have them to wonder—if we cannot be filled with Christ's love, we may be filled with wondering. To him and his rich grace I recommend you. I pray you, pray for me, and forget not to praise.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, June 17, 1637.

## TO LADY GAITGIRTH.

Mistress,

I LONG to know how matters stand betwixt Christ and your soul: I know time cannot change him in his love. You may yourself ebb and flow, rise and fall, wax and wane; but your Lord is this day as he was yesterday: and it is your comfort, that your salvation is not rolled upon wheels of your own making, neither have you to do with a Saviour of your own imagining. God hath singled out a Mediator, strong and mighty, able to bear you and your burdens, were they ten times as many, and to save you to the uttermost. Your often seeking to him, cannot make you a burden to him. Christ compassionates you in all your down-castings; but it is good for you that he hideth himself sometimes: it is not niceness, shyness, or coldness of love, that causeth Christ to withdraw under a curtain and a vail, so that you cannot see him; but he knows you could not bear a high spring-tide of his felt love, full sails, and a fair gale always. His visits to his dearest ones are thin sown; he could not let out his rivers of love upon his own, but these rivers would be in hazard to loosen a young plant at the root; and he knoweth this of you: you must therefore wait for the sensible and full manifestations of his kindness, till you are above the sun and moon: that is the country where you will be enlarged for that love which you are not now able to contain. Cast the burden of your sweet babes upon Christ, and lighten

your heart, by laying your *all* upon him: he will be their God. I hope to see you up the mountain yet, and glad in the salvation of God: frame yourself for Christ, and startle not at his cross: his love is stronger than to let go its hold of us, children, who cannot go but by such a hold as Christ's. It is good that we have nothing of our own, since we may borrow all from Christ; and it is our happiness, that Christ is our security for heaven, and principal debtor for such poor bankrupts as we are. I request you give the laird, your husband, thanks for his care of me. I pray and write, mercy, and peace, and blessings, to him and his. Grace, grace be with you for ever.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To MR. JOHN FERGUSHILL.*

Reverend and dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. I find the grief of my silence, and the fear to be held at the door of Christ's house, swelling upon me; and the truth is, were it not that I am comforted now and then with a taste of Christ's love, I fear I should bring dishonour upon his cross, which is more honourable than such a soft and silly-minded creature as I am worthy of; for I have little in me, but weakness, and superlative and excessive apprehensions of fear, and sadness, and sorrow; and often God's terrors do surround me, because Christ look-



eth not so favourably upon me as a poor witness would have him; and I think I shall die but minting and aiming to serve and honour my Lord Jesus. Few know how empty I am at home: and, believe me, I say the truth in Christ, the only gall and wormwood in my cup, and that which hath filled me with fear, hath been, lest my sins, which sun, and moon, and the Lord's children were never witness to, should have moved my Lord to strike me with dumb sabbaths, or visit me with this cross. Lord pardon my soft and weak jealousies, if I be here in error. My very dear brother, I looked for more large, and more particular letters from you, for my comfort in this; for your works before have strengthened me. I pray you mend this, and be thankful and painstaking while you have a piece or corner of the Lord's vineyard to dress. Would to God I could have leave to follow you to break the clods; yet I rather wish I could command my soul to wait upon the Lord in silence. I am sure, while Christ lives, I am well befriended: I hope he will extend his kindness and power for me; but God be thanked it is no worse with me, than a cross for Christ and his truth. I will seek no more, than that my Lord may be glorified in my sufferings; but what can I add to him: or how can a borne-down prisoner commend Christ to the love of souls! But I know he seeth to his own glory, better than my thoughts can dream of. I see, in all our trials, our Lord will not mix our wares and his grace together; but he will have each man to know his own, that such a one as I, may say in my sufferings, This is Christ's

Christ himself: few are saved. Let her consider what joy the smiles of God in Christ will be to her soul, when her body is laid by for a time, till the fair morning of the general resurrection. Grace, grace be with you. Your soul's eternal well-wisher.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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TO CASSINCARRIE.

Much-honoured Sir,

I HAVE been too long in writing to you. I am confident you have learned to prize Christ, and his love and favour, more than ordinary professors do, whose sight is taken up with the beauty of this over-gilded world, that promiseth fair to all its lovers, but in the time of trial proves only a deceiver. I know you are not ignorant, that men come not to this world, as some do to a fair, to see and be seen—to behold and to go home again; you came hither to treat with God, and agree with him in his Christ, for salvation to your soul, and to seek reconciliation with an angry, wrathful God, in a covenant of peace made for you in Christ: and therefore, worthy Sir, I pray you, by the salvation of your soul, and by the mercy of God, and your appearance before Christ, do this in sad earnest, and let not salvation be your holiday task only, or a work by the way; for men think that this may be done in three days' space on a feather-bed, when death and they have met together: and that with a word or two they shall make their soul-matters right. Alas! this is to

rest loose and unsure in the matters of our salvation: the seeking of this world, and the glory of it, is indeed but an odd and by-errand, which we may let slip, provided we make salvation sure. Oh! when will men learn to be that heavenly wise as to free and divorce their souls from all idol lovers, and make Christ the only, only one, and trim and make ready their lamps, while they have time and day! How soon will some few years pass away! and then, when the day is ended, and this life's lease expired, what have men of world's glory but dreams and thoughts? Oh! how blessed a thing is it to labour for Christ, and to make him sure! Know and try, in time, your hold of him, and the rights and charters of heaven, and upon what terms you have Christ and the Gospel; and what Christ is worth in your estimation, and how lightly you esteem of other things, and how dearly of Christ. I am sure, if you see him in his beauty and glory, you will see him to be that incomparable jewel which you should seek, though you were to forfeit your few years' portion of this life's joys. Oh! happy soul for evermore! who can rightly compare this life with that long-lasting life to come, and can balance the weighty glory of the one, with the light golden vanity of the other! The day of the Lord is at hand, and all men shall appear as they are; there shall be no borrowed colours in that day; men now borrow the lustre of Christianity, but how many counterfeit masks will be burnt in the day of God, in the fire that shall consume the earth and the works that are in it! And however Christ's servants have the hardest part of it now, yet, in the

presence of my Lord, whom I serve in the Spirit, I would not exchange Christ's prison, bonds, and chains, for the golden chains and lordly rents of the men of this world. Worthy, worthy for evermore is Christ, for whom the saints of God suffer the short pains of this life !

Sir, I wish your soul may be more acquainted with the worth of Christ. Grace, grace be with you. Yours in his only Lord and Master,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To* LADY CARDONESS.

Mistress,

I BESEECH you in the Lord Jesus, make every day more and more of Christ; and try your growth in the grace of God, and what new ground you gain daily upon corruption; for travellers are, day by day, either advancing farther on, and nearer home, or else they are not going the right way to accomplish their journey. I request you, faint not because this world and you are at yea and nay, and because this is not a home that smileth on you: the wise Lord, who knoweth you, will have it so, because he casteth a net for your love, to catch it, and gather it in to himself; therefore bear patiently the loss of children, and burdens, and other discontentments, either within or without the house. Your Lord is seeking you, and you seek him: let none have your love and choice, but your Lord Jesus. Set not your heart upon the world, since God hath not made it

your portion ; for you cannot expect to get two portions, and to be happy twice, and to have an upper heaven, and an under heaven too : Christ our Lord, and his saints, were not so, and therefore let go your hold of this life, and of the good things of it. Learn daily both to possess and miss Christ in his secret smiles: he must go and come, because his infinite wisdom thinketh it best for you: we shall be together one day. There will be no complaints on either side in heaven ; there will be none there but he and we, the Bridegroom and the Bride: temptations, trials, desertions, losses, sad hearts, pain, and death shall be at an end; and the devil must give up his office of tempting. O blessed is the soul, whose hope looketh straight to that day ! It is not our part to make a treasure here ; any thing under the covering of heaven, that we can build upon, is but ill ground, and a sandy foundation. There is no good thing but God, that can bear our weight ; there shall nothing find my weight, or be the foundation of my happiness, except God. I know all created power would sink under me, if I were to lean down upon it ; and therefore it is better to rest on God, than to sink or fall ; and we, weak souls, must have a resting-place, for we cannot stand alone. Let us, then, be wise in our choice, and choose our own blessedness, which is, to trust in the Lord. Each one of us hath an idol ; but it is our folly to divide our narrow and little love ; it will not serve two: it is best, then, to hold it whole and together, and to give it to Christ ; for then we get double interest for our love, when we lend it to, and lay it

out upon Christ; and we are sure, besides, that the stock cannot diminish. Follow on after this love: tire not of him, but come in, and see his beauty and excellency, and feed your soul upon Christ's sweetness. Climb up the mountain with joy, and faint not: our best things here have a worm in them; all our joys besides God, in the inner half, are but woes and sorrows. Christ, Christ, is that which our love and desires can sleep sweetly and rest safely upon. Now, the very God of peace establish you in Christ. Help a prisoner with your prayers, and entreat that our Lord would be pleased to visit me with a sight of his beauty in his house, as he hath sometimes done. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. B.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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To WILLIAM GORDON, at Kenmure.

Dear Brother,

I HAVE been long in answering your letter, which came in good time to me. You complain that you want a mark of the sound work of grace and love in your soul. For answer, consider for your satisfaction, (till God send more,) Job i. 3—14. And as for your complaint of deadness, and doubtings, Christ, I hope, will take you and your deadness together; the only thing that will bring sinners to Christ's healing hand, is that which you write of, some feeling of death and sin, that bringeth forth complaints; the more pain, and the more night-

watching, and the more fevers, the better; a soul bleeding to death, till Christ were called for in all haste to close up the wound with his own hand and balm, were a very good disease, whereas many are dying of a whole heart. We have all too little of pain and terror that way. Alas ! I am not come so far on in the way, as to say, in sad earnest, Lord Jesus, great and sovereign Physician, here is a pained patient for thee. But the thing that we mistake in, is, that we hold the want of victory to be the mark of one that hath no grace; nay, but I say, the want of fighting were a mark of no grace: but I will not say the want of victory is such a mark; for where there is fire, it is Christ's part to keep it alive, and to pray the Father that my faith fail not, if I in the mean time be wrestling, and doing, and fighting, and mourning; for prayer putteth not the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to flight at first; but our Lord will permit them to contend, and prove each other's strength, God overruling the struggle; and you do well not to doubt, if the ground-stone be sure, but to try if it be so; for there is a great difference between doubting that we have grace, and trying if we have grace; the former may be sin, but the latter is good. Holy fear is a searching of the camp, that there be no enemy within our bosom to betray us, and a seeing that all be fast and sure; for I see many leaky vessels going fair before the wind, and professors who take their conversion upon trust, and they go on securely, and see not the under-water, till a storm sink them. Each man has need, twice a-day and oftener, to search and examine himself

with the candle of the Lord. Pray for me, that the Lord would grant me once more to hold a candle to this dark world. Grace, grace be with you.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To MARGARET FULLERTON.*

Mistress,

I AM glad to hear that you have cast your love on Christ: fix more and more love every day upon him. Verily, I see no object in heaven or in earth, that I could bestow my love upon, that can compare with Christ. Alas! that clay, and lime, and shadows, run away with our love, which is ill-spent upon any but him. Each fool, at the day of judgment, will seek back his love from the creatures, when he shall see them all consuming in the fire; but they will prove irresponsible debtors; and therefore it is best that we look well here, ere we fix our love. I find now, under his cross, that I would fain give him more than I have to give him, if giving were in my power: but I rather wish him my heart, than give him it: except he take it, and put himself in possession of it, (for I hope he hath a right to me, since he hath ransomed me,) I see not how Christ can have me. O that he would be pleased to come into my soul, and take his own! but when he goeth away, and hideth himself, all that I had of him is, as it were, fallen to the bottom of the sea. I desire no joy, I seek no other, God knoweth, but the warmth and fire of God's love. O what sad hours have I,



when I think Christ's love bloweth past me! Yet what am I, to love such a one! or to be loved by that high and lofty One! The angels veil their faces before him; what am I, to raise my sinful eyes to such infinite brightness! Yet, O that he would come near, and give me leave to look upon him! Oh Great King, why standest thou aloof? why remainest thou beyond the mountains? O Well-beloved, why dost thou pain a poor soul by delays? A long time out of thy glorious presence, is as death to me. I must see him; we must meet; I cannot do without him. If his love be taken from me, all my joy and happiness is at an end; and therefore I believe Christ will never do me so much harm, as to bereave a poor prisoner of his love: it were cruelty to take it from me, and he who is kindness itself, cannot be cruel; and why should I be so fickle in my love, as to love him only in as far as fond and foolish sense carrieth me, and no more; and when I see not, taste not, then to have all to seek! But this is our weakness, till we be at home, and fitted to bear the fulness of Christ's love.

Pray for me. The prayers of Christ's prisoner be upon you, and the Lord's presence accompany you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, July 6, 1637.

To ROBERT LENNOX, of *Disdove*.

Dear Brother,

I BESEECH you in the Lord Jesus, make sure and fast work of life eternal. Sow not rotten seed: every man's work will speak for itself, what his seed hath been. How many do I see, who sow only to the flesh! Alas! what a crop will that be, when the Lord shall put in his hook to reap this world, that is ripe and white for judgment! I recommend to you holiness and sanctification, and that you keep yourself clean from this present evil world. We delight to tell our own dreams, and to flatter our own flesh with the hope we have; it were more wisdom for us to be free, plain, honest, and sharp with our own souls. O how hard a thing it is, to get the soul to give up with all things on this side of death and doomsday! We say, we are removing and going from this world; but our heart stirreth not one foot off its seat. Alas! I see few heavenly-minded souls, that have nothing upon the earth but their body of clay, going up and down this earth, because their soul, and the powers of it, are up in heaven, and there their hearts live, desire, enjoy, rejoice. O men's souls have no wings; and therefore night and day, they keep their nest, and come no nearer to Christ. Sir, take you to your one thing needful, to Christ, that you may be acquainted with the taste of his sweetness and excellency, and charge your love not to dote upon this world; for it will not do your business in that day, when nothing

will come in good stead to you, but God's favour. Build upon Christ some good choice and fast work; for when your soul hath for many years posted and wandered through the creatures, ye will come home again with the wind. They are not good, at least not the soul's good: it is the infinite Godhead that must allay the sharpness of your hunger after happiness; otherwise, there will still be a want of satisfaction to your desires; but I am sure, there is sufficient for your utmost desires in Christ. Oh for the help of angels' tongues, to make Christ's worth known to many thousands! How little doth this world see of him! and how far are they from the love of him, seeing there is so much loveliness, beauty, and sweetness in Christ, that no created eye did ever yet see. I would that all men knew his glory, and were partakers of his high, and deep, and broad, and boundless love. Sir, stand fast in the truth of Christ, which ye have received; yield not to winds, but ride out, and let Christ be your Anchor. Pray for me, his prisoner, and that the Lord would send me among you, to feed his people. Grace, grace be with you.

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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To JOHN FLEMING, *Baillie of Leith.*

Worthy Sir,

THE Lord hath visited me in this strange town; blessed be his holy name. I find his cross easy and

light, and I hope he will continue with his poor sold-Joseph, who is separated from his brethren. His comforts have abounded towards me. My enemies, contrary to their intentions, have made me more blessed, and have put me in a sweeter possession of Christ, than ever I had before; only the memory of the fair days I had with my Well-beloved, amongst the flock intrusted to me, keepeth me low, and sour-eth my unseen joy; but it must be so, and He is wise who tutoreth me this way: for that which my brethren have, and I am without, and others of this world possess, I am content. My faith will trust God for my happiness. No son is offended that his father giveth him not wages twice a-year, for he is to abide in the house when the inheritance is to be divided. It is better God's children live upon hope, than upon hire.—Thus remembering my love to your worthy and kind wife, I bless you and her, and all yours, in the Lord's name.

Yours in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 20, 1637,

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To EARLSTOUN, *Younger*.

Much-honoured Sir,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be with you. I am well—Christ triumpheth in me, blessed be his name; I have all things, I burden no man; I see this earth and the fulness thereof is my Father's—sweet, sweet is the cross of my Lord. My enemies have unde-

signedly contributed to make me blessed. This is my palace, not my prison, when my Lord shineth and smileth upon me; but often he hideth himself, and there is a day of law and a court of accusation within me. Oh, my neglects! oh, my unseen guiltiness! I imagined that a sufferer for Christ's sake kept the keys of Christ's treasury, and might take out his comforts when he pleased; but I see, a sufferer and a witness will be held back, and must wait His pleasure, as well as other poor sinners. This cross hath let me see, that heaven is not at the next door, and that it is a castle not soon taken: I see, also, it is neither pain nor art to play the hypocrite. We have all learned to sell ourselves for double price, and to make the people who call ten twenty, and twenty a hundred, esteem us half gods, or men fallen out of the clouds: but oh, sincerity, sincerity! if I knew what sincerity meaneth!—Sir, lay the foundation thus, and you shall not soon shrink, or be shaken: make tight work, and fasten your anchor upon good ground, I mean within the vail; and your ship shall ride against all storms: and verily this is all in all, to gain Christ. All other things are shadows, dreams, fancies, and nothing! Sir, remember my love to your mother: I pray for mercy and grace to her; I wish she may go on towards heaven. Grace be with you. Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 22, 1637.

TO JOHN GORDON.

Worthy and dear Brother,

I HAVE been too long in writing to you ; but multitude of letters taketh much time from me. I bless His great name, whom I serve in the Spirit, that I find Christ to be sweet and excellent, even in his reproaches and his cross ; and I find this world, when I have looked upon it on both sides, within and without, to be but a fool's idol : Lord, let it not be the nest that my hope buildeth in. Verily, they have but a handful of water, and are but like a child clasping his two hands about a night-shadow, who idolize any created hope. I now put the price of a dream or fable upon all things but God, and that desirable and love-worthy one, my Lord Jesus : let all the world be nothing, and let God be all things. My very dear brother, know you are just so near heaven as you are far from yourself, and far from the love of a bewitching world ; for this world, in its gain and glory, is but the great and notable deceiver, that all the sons of men have been beguiled with, these five thousand years ; and its fruits nothing but vanity, dreams, golden imaginations, and shadows ; for there is no good ground here, under the covering of heaven, for poor wearied souls to rest upon. O ! he who is called God, he whom they term Christ Jesus, is worth the having indeed ! Let every claim that any creature can have to me be cancelled, except that claim my Lord Jesus hath to me ! Oh, that he would make good his claim to me, for it is my pain

and remediless want to be without him. Brother, I know you see that your hour-glass is running out, your thread is wearing short, therefore lose no time. Remember me, the Lord's prisoner. Grace be with you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To MR. JOHN FERGUSHILL.*

Reverend and well-beloved Brother,

I must still, by my lines, provoke you to write me: whereat you need not wonder; for grief cannot be silent, and the cross gives much to say, and speak it must, either good or bad. If my former miscarriages, and my now silent sabbaths, seem to me to speak wrath from the Lord, I dare say it is by Satan taking advantage of my cowardly and feeble apprehensions, which start at straws. I know faith is not so faint and foolish as to tremble at every false alarm; yet I gather this out of it, Blessed are they whom God teaches to use a cross rightly, and that there is some art required therein. I pray God, I may not be so bereft, as that Christ should leave me to be my own tutor and my own physician. Shall I not think, that my Lord Jesus will take his own place upon him?—and is not this his office, “To comfort us, and all that are cast down, in all their tribulations?” 2 Cor. i. 4. Alas! I know I am a fool to find any fault in Christ's way with my soul. If I have not a stock to present Christ at his coming,

yet I pray God I may be able, with joy, faith, and constancy, to show the Captain of my salvation, in that day, the wounds that I received in his service. Though my faith hang by a small thread, I hope that thread will not break; and though my Lord get no service from me but fruitless wishes, yet I trust these will be accepted on Christ's account. I have nothing to comfort me, but that I say, Will the Lord disappoint a soul that waiteth on him? Our Lord's love is not so cruel, as to let a poor man see Christ and heaven, and never give him more, because of his poverty. Nay, I know Christ has purchased my wedding-garment, and redeemed the inheritance which I have forfeited; and the only thing that commendeth sinners to Christ, is extreme necessity and want; Christ's love is ready to make and provide a ransom for a poor sinner who hath nothing of his own:—"Ho! ye that have no money, come and buy!" Isa. lv. 1. Now, brother, I see that former crosses would not have been sufficient for me, and therefore Christ hath taken a fresh rod, that seemeth to talk with my soul, and make me tremble. My faith now is often in more danger of shipwreck, when I lose my compass, and am blown on a rock, than those who are my beholders, standing upon the shore, are aware of; and counsel to a sick man is sooner given than taken. I have been waiting to see what friends in place and power would do for us: but when the Lord looseth the pins of his own tabernacle, he will have himself to be acknowledged as the only Builder-up thereof; and therefore, I would take back my hope that I lent and laid in men's hands, and



give it wholly to Christ. It is no time for me now to set up idols of my own: it were a pity to give an ounce-weight of hope to any besides Christ. Happy were I, if I had any thing that Christ would seek or accept of; but now, alas! I see not what I can do for him, except it be to talk a little, and babble upon a piece of paper, concerning his love. It were my happiness, when I am in his house of wine, and when I find a feast-day, if I could hearken and hear for the time to come (Isa. xlii. 23.): but I see it is in deep water, where we feel no footing, that Christ's love finds timely employment. If I come to heaven any way, though like a tired traveller, leaning on my guide, I may be thankful, who have no strength of my own to perform the journey. I never thought there had been need of so much wrestling to reach the top of that steep mountain as now I find. We cannot steal quietly to heaven, in Christ's company, without a conflict and a cross. Grace be with you,  
Yours in Christ Jesus, his Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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To LADY CARDONESS.

My dearly-beloved, and longed-for in the Lord,

I LONG to hear how your soul prospereth, and how the kingdom of God thriveth in you. I exhort and beseech you, in Christ's name, faint not, weary not. There is a great necessity of heaven—you must needs have it: all other things, as houses, lands,

children, husbands, friends, country, credit, health, wealth, honour, may be done without; but heaven is your one thing needful, the good part which cannot be taken from you. See that you buy the field where the pearl is; sell all, and make a purchase of salvation. Think it not easy, for the ascent to eternal glory is steep; many are lying dead by the way, that are slain by security. I have now been led by my Lord Jesus to such a point in Christianity, as makes me think little of former things; but I am still wanting so many things, that I am almost doubting whether I have yet had any thing at all: every man thinks he is rich enough in grace, till he looks into his purse in the day of heavy trial, and finds it poor and light. I found I had not wherewithal to bear my expenses, and should have fainted, if want and penury had not driven me to the storehouse of all. I beseech you make conscience of your ways. I have written my mind at length to your husband—write to me again his case. I cannot forget him in my prayers; I am thinking Christ has some claim to him. My counsel is, that you bear with him, when passion overtakes him; “a soft answer turneth away wrath.” Answer him in what he speaketh, and apply yourself in the fear of God to him; you will remove much of the weight of your cross in that way. When Christ hideth himself, wait patiently, yet plead for his return: it is not a time then to be carelessly patient; it is well to be grieved when he hideth his smiles; yet believe in his love, and wait patiently, though in the dark. You must learn to hold up your head above water, even

when the sense of his presence is not with you: I trust in God, he will bring your ship safe to land. I counsel you to study sanctification, and to be dead to this world; I beg the help of your prayers, for I forget not you: counsel your husband to fulfil my joy, and to seek the Lord's face; show him from me, that my desire is to hear that he is in the Lord. He is often in my mind, I cannot forget him. Bless John from me; I write blessings to him and to your husband, and the rest of your children. Let it not be said I am not in your house through neglect of the Sabbath-day. Your loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Feb. 20, 1637.

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To WILLIAM GLENDINNING.

Dear Brother,

YOUR case is unknown to me, whether you be our Lord's prisoner or not: however it be, I know our Lord hath a claim to you, and that he has chosen you an honourable cross; and I wish you much joy and comfort of it; for I have nothing to say of Christ's cross, but much good. I know he seeks to set us free from this house of clay, this native prison, this earth that we love full well; and verily, when Christ giveth me power to look upwards, it is one of my greatest wonders, that earth and clay have such charms for souls not made of clay, and that we should make such an idol of this earth, as that it should wrong Christ of our love. How fast, how fast, doth

our ship sail; and how fair a wind hath time to blow us off these coasts, and this land of dying, perishing things; and alas! our ship saileth one way, and runneth many miles in one hour, to hasten us upon eternity, and our hearts and affections are swimming back towards ease, lawless pleasure, vain honour, perishing riches, and to fasten our bits of broken anchors upon the worst ground in the world, this fleeting and perishing life; and, in the mean while, time and tide carry us upon another life, and there is daily less and less oil in our lamps, and less and less sand in our watch-glass. O what a wise course were it for us to look away from the false beauty of our prison, and to mind, and eye, and long for our country. Lord, take us home—for myself I think I have cause to long for a covert from this storm in heaven. I see nothing in this life but sin, and the sour fruits of sin: and O what a burden is sin! and what a slavery and miserable bondage is it, to be at the nod of such a master as a body of sin!—truly when I think of it, it is a wonder Christ does not consume such a dry branch as I am; but seeing he hath sworn that sin shall not loose his unchangeable covenant, I keep house amongst the children, and wait with the rest, till my Lord break my fetters, and destroy this body of sin, and open the door of this cage of earth that the bird may fly out, and the imprisoned soul be at liberty. In the mean time, the least intimations of Christ's love is sweet, and the hope of marriage with the Bridegroom, enableth me to wait joyfully; and when I think of this, I feel that winters, and summers, and years, and days, and

time, do me a pleasure, that they shorten this untwisted and weak thread of life, and carry me past my sin and miseries to be shortly with my Bridegroom.

Dear brother, pray for me, that it would please the Lord of the vineyard to give me room to preach his righteousness again to the great congregation. Grace, grace be with you. Yours in the Lord Jesus,  
S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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*To his Reverend and Dear Brother, MR. ROBERT  
BLAIR.*

Reverend and dear Brother,

THE reason you give for your not writing to me, affecteth me much; it humbleth me, when such a one as you conceive an opinion of me, or any thing in me—the truth is, when I come home to myself, I find strange penury. O how worthless is my supposed stock, and how little have I!—He to whom I am as crystal, who knoweth what is in me, and needeth not that any one should tell him, knoweth that I speak what I think, and am convinced of: but lest this should seem but art to fetch home reputation, I speak no more of it: my truest boast is, that I am Christ's ransomed. His relation to me is, that I am sick, and he is the Physician of whom I stand in need. Alas! how masterly and unfaithful

am I with Christ! He bindeth, I loose; he buildeth, I cast down; he works out a salvation for me, and I mar it; I forfeit my kingdom and heritage; I lose what I had; but Christ is ever nigh me, following on to restore what I lose, to raise me when I fall. Were I in heaven, and possessed of my crown, if free-will were my guide, I should lose heaven, I should let go, and lose Jesus my Lord. O well is it for me for evermore, that I have no merit on which to found a claim to Christ; my sole merit with him is, that I am a creature, that God will not put any trust into; I was and am bewildered with temptations, and wanted a guide to heaven: O what have I to say of that excellent, surpassing, and superëminent thing they call the grace of God! the way of free redemption in Christ! when poor, wretched, dead in law, and imprisoned in justice's closet ward, I met with the noble, eternally kind, tender-hearted Jesus; nay, rather when he first sought and knew me, I found that he scorned to take a price of any of his creatures; and for this would I praise him, that heaven is a free gift to all his redeemed ones—we have nothing to pay but thanks. O wo is me, that even in these I am a bankrupt debtor!

For your journey to F—— you do well to follow it; the camp is Christ's ordinary bed; it may be the Lord hath some centurions you are sent to. My dear brother, I will think it comfort if you will remember me in your petitions to our Well-beleved—wherever you are, I am mindful of you. Now, the

great Shepherd of the sheep, the very God of peace,  
establish and confirm you till the day of his coming.

Yours in his only Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 9, 1637.

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*To my LORD CRAIGHALL.*

My very worthy and dear Lord,

WAIT upon him, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and look for him; wait patiently a little upon the Bridegroom's return again, that your soul may live, and you may rejoice with your Lord's inheritance; your sky shall quickly clear, and your fair morning dawn. Think (as the truth indeed is) that Christ is just now saying to you, "And will ye also leave me!" I profess myself but a weak and feeble man; when I first came to Christ's camp, I had nothing to maintain this war, or to bear me out in these encounters; and I am little better yet; but since I find furniture, armour, and strength from the consecrated Captain, the Prince of our salvation, who was perfected through suffering, I esteem suffering for Christ a happy life. I find that our wants qualify us for Christ, and though your Lordship write, you despair to attain to such a communion and fellowship, (which I would not have you to think) yet would you nobly and courageously venture to make over to Christ, for his honour now lying at stake, your estate, place, and honour, he would lovingly, and largely requite you: venture upon

Christ's invitation, and I dare answer for it, ye shall say as it is in Psalm xvi. 7. "I bless the Lord who gave me counsel." Remember there is a "wo to him, by whom offences come," this wo was denounced by Christ, and it is heavier than the wo of the law; it is the Mediator's vengeance, and that is double vengeance to those who are enlightened. Free yourself from unlawful anguish, about advising and resolving: when you have found the truth, hold it fast, go not again to make a new search and inquiry for it—it is easy to force conscience to believe as you will, not as you know: it is easy for you to cast your light into prison, and detain God's truth in unrighteousness; but that prisoner will break ward to your incomparable torture. Fear your light, and stand in awe of it; for it is from God. Now may the Prince of peace, he who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of his sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, establish you, and give you sound light, and counsel you to follow Christ. Remember my obliged service to my Lord your father, and mother, and to your lady. Grace be with you.

Your Lordship's in all obedience,

S. R.

Aberdeen, Aug. 10, 1637.

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TO PATRICK CARSEN.

Dear and loving Friend,

I CANNOT but, upon the opportunity of a bearer, exhort you to resign the love of your youth to



Christ, and in this day while your sun is high, and your youth serveth you to seek the Lord and his face, for there is nothing out of heaven so necessary for you as Christ, and you cannot be ignorant that your day will end, and the night of death will call you from the pleasures of this life, and a doom passed at death, standeth for ever, even as long as God liveth. Youth is ordinarily but too fit a season for Satan's purposes, for pride and vanity abound in it. O that there were such a heart in you as to fear the Lord, and to dedicate your soul and body to his service. When the time comes that your poor soul is set at liberty from its prison-house of clay, then a good conscience, and your Lord's favour, will be worth all this world's glory: seek it as your garland and crown. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 14, 1637.

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To JOHN CARSEN.

My well-beloved and dear Friend,

EVERY one seeketh not God, and far fewer find him, because they seek amiss: he is to be sought far above all things, if men really desire to find what they seek. Leave feathers and shadows to children, and go seek your well-beloved. Your only errand to the world is to win Christ; therefore let Christ have all your love without dividing it: it is little enough if there were more of it; the serving of the

world and sin hath but a base reward; vapour instead of pleasure, and but a night-dream for true ease to the soul. Go where you will, your soul will find no rest but in Christ's bosom—inquire for him, come to him, and rest you on the slain Son of God. I sought him, and I found him, and I have in him all I can wish or want: he hath made me a king over the world. Princes cannot overcome me. O if you and all knew what sweet terms of mercy are between him and his people! Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 11, 1637.

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*To LADY BOYD.*

Madam,

I WOULD have written to your Ladyship ere now, but the opinion some have of there being that in me, which I know there is not, hath put me out of love with writing to any; for it is easy to make a public show of religion, but alas! it is not so easy to have it meet for Christ's eye. My Lord knows how far behind I am; I have received much love from Christ, but I give him little or none again. My white side appears on paper to men; but at home and within, I find much black work, and great cause for a low sail and little boasting; and yet though I see the reproaches of conscience to be just, the manner of the tempter's pressing them, is, I think, dishonest. My comfort is, that Christ may be glorified by

bestowing his saving grace on such a one as me. I wish all professors would fall in love with grace; all our song should be of his free grace: we are but too lazy and careless in seeking it—it is all our riches here, and glory in the bud; I wish I could speak all its value. I was the law's man, and under the law, and under a curse; but grace brought me from under that hard lord, and I rejoice that I am grace's freeholder. I pay tribute to none for heaven, for my heritage holdeth of Christ, my King. Infinite wisdom hath devised this excellent way of freeholding for sinners: it is a better way to heaven, than the old way that was in Adam's days; it hath this fair advantage, that no man's emptiness and want layeth any restraint on Christ, or hindereth his salvation; and that is well for me! Our new Landlord putteth the names of Adam's forlorn heirs, bankrupts and beggars, the crooked and the blind, in his free charters. Heaven and angels may wonder that we have gotten such a way of escape from sin and hell; and this way which Christ has made, and brought out the poor captives by, is more than my poor shallow thoughts can comprehend. I would think sufferings, glory, (and I am sometimes not far from it,) if my Lord would shed upon me a fresh supply of free grace; but I have not now, nor for a long time, found such high spring-tides as formerly: the sea is out, and the wind of his Spirit calm, and I cannot cause the wind to blow, nor by requesting the sea cause it to flow again; I can only wait upon the banks and shore-side, till the Lord send a full sea, that with spread sails I may magnify Christ—

prison-door be opened, and the poor prisoner set at liberty. You draw nigh to the water-side, ask for your guide to take you to the other side. Look well to your accounts; let not the world be your portion; what have you to do with dead clay? You are a child of God, therefore set your heart on the inheritance; go up before-hand, and see your future possession; in your Father's house are many dwelling-places; I know Christ hath secured you one already, but make yourself acquainted with the house you are going to, and look to it often: men take a sight of lands ere they buy them: set your heart on things that are above, where Christ is at the right hand of God. Stir up your husband to mind his own country at home; counsel him to deal mercifully with the poor people of God under him; they are Christ's, and not his, therefore desire him to show them merciful dealings and kindness, and to be good to their souls. I desire you to write to me: it may be my parish forget me, but I may not, I cannot forget them; they are my sighs in the night, and my tears through the day. I think myself like a husband plucked from the wife of his youth. O Lord, be my judge what joy it would be to my soul, to hear that my ministry hath left the Son of God among them, and that they are walking in Christ! Remember my love to your son and daughter; desire them, from me, to seek the Lord in their youth, and to give him the morning of their days; and acquaint them with the word of God, and prayer. Grace be with you. Pray for the prisoner of Christ; in my

heart I forget you not.—Your lawful and loving  
Pastor in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, March 6, 1637.

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TO MRS. STEWART.

Madam,

GRACE, mercy and peace be with you. I am sorry that you take it unkindly that I have not written to you. I am judged to be that which I am not. I fear, if I were tried in the furnace, I should be found to have little that is worth the eye of God's servants; but I would fain have that which you and others believe me to have: but you are only witnesses to my outward part, and to some words in paper. O that he would give me more than seeming grace! But if I have any love to him, it is from him; and Christ hath both love to me, and wisdom to direct his love; and I see the best thing I have hath so much dross with it, as might condemn both me and it; and we have need of a Saviour, were it for no more than to pardon the faults, and diseases, and weakness of the new man, and to take away (if we may so say) our godly sins, and the dross of our spiritual love. Wo, wo is me! what need is there then of Christ's blood, to cleanse and wash away the old man, the body of sin, the image of Satan. I wish for no other joy on this side of the last sea that I must cross, than this service of Christ—to make my blackness beauty, my deadness life,

my guiltiness sanctification. I long much for that day when I shall be holy: O what spots are yet unwashed! Happy are they for evermore, who can apply to Christ to set his blood and death to work to cleanse their souls! I know it is our sin, that would have sanctification on the sunny side of the hill, and holiness with no crosses at all; yet I have some weak experience, (but very weak indeed,) that if I could only find Christ by going through torments, yet so would I meet him. I find this use of suffering, that Christ's winnowing separateth the chaff and corn of the saints, and discovereth our dross from his gold: so that corruption and grace are so discerned, that Christ saith in the furnace, That is mine, and this is yours: thy impatience, thy unbelief, thy contention, these are thine; and faith, patient love, joy, courage, are mine. Oh, that I may die waiting and looking for Christ! Pray for me his prisoner. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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To ALEXANDER GORDON, of *Garloch*.

Dear Brother,

If Christ were not unchangeable, I could not keep covenant with him; but he is far, far, even infinite, heaven's height above man, and that is our happiness. Sinners can do nothing but make wounds, that Christ may heal them; and make

debts, that he may pay them; and fall, that he may raise and quicken them; and dig for themselves pits of destruction, that he may ransom them. Now I will bless the Lord for the free grace of God, and a free ransom given for lost souls! Only, alas! guilt makes me ashamed to apply Christ, and to think it presumption in me to put out my unclean and withered hand to such a Saviour! But it is neither shame nor presumption for a drowning man to swim to a rock—nor for a ship-wrecked soul to cast itself upon Christ. The more guilty I am, the more I need Christ. We wonder not that beggars beg from the richer; and who are so poor as we? and who is so rich as he who selleth fine gold? I see then, it is our happiness, that we have no other way under heaven, (let guilt plead as it may,) but to creep in lowly and submissively with our wants to Christ. I have also reason to give his cross a good name and report. O how worthy is Christ of my light sufferings! But, alas! my soul is like a ship run on ground, through the ebbing of the water, and I find not how to bring it afloat; it is so cold, and dead, that I see not how to warm it. Wo, wo is me, I have a Lord most worthy of my love, and who asks my love and heart, and I have nothing to give him. Dear brother, the farther you advance, the more treasure you will find in Christ. Heaven, and earth, and angels, may wonder at the love, sweetness, majesty, and excellency that are in him! I forget you not; pray for me. Grace, grace be with you. Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

To JOHN BELL, *Elder.*

My very loving Friend,

I HAVE very often and long expected your letter; but if you are well in soul and body, I am the less solicitous. I beseech you in the Lord Jesus, to think of your country above; and now, when old age, the twilight going before the darkness of the grave, and the sinking of your sun before your night is come upon you, make your peace with Christ ere you put your foot in the ship, and turn your back on this life. Many deceive themselves with this, that they are free of scandalous and crying abominations; but the tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is for the fire. The man that is not born again, cannot enter into the kingdom of God; common honesty will not take men to heaven; alas! that men should think they have found Christ, who had never a sick night through the terrors of God in their soul, or an aching heart for sin! I know the Lord hath given you light, and the knowledge of his will; but that is not all, neither will that suffice you; I wish your soul to be awakened, and that you deceive not yourself in the matter of your salvation. My dear brother, search yourself with the candle of God, and try if the life of God and Christ be in you; salvation is not laid at every man's door; the righteous are scarcely saved, and many run as fast as either you or I, who miss the crown—God send me salvation! Men think it but a step to heaven; but when so few are saved, even but a handful, or



a remnant, (as God's word saith,) of a number like the sand of the sea, what cause have we to rouse ourselves, and to ask our poor soul, "Whither goest thou? where shalt thou lodge at night? where are thy charters, and the deeds of thy heavenly inheritance?" O see! see that you build not for salvation on slippery ground, and think all is well, and leave your soul loose and uncertain; look to your building and to your ground-stone, and to what signs of Christ are in you, and turn your back on this world; it is time now in the evening, to cease from your ordinary work, and high time to make sure of your lodging at night. It is your salvation that is in dependance, and that is a great and weighty business, though many make light work of the matter. Now the Lord enable you by his grace to work it out. Your lawful and loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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To WILLIAM GORDON, of *Robertoun*.

Dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy and peace be with you. As often as I think on our case, I am constrained to say, Prisoners in a dungeon, condemned to be without the light of sun, moon, or candle, till their dying day, are no more, nay not so much to be pitied as we are; for they, weary of their life, hate their prison—but we, in our prison, where we see little, spend our nights in the pleasures of our weak dreams,

and long for no better life than this!—but at the blast of the last trumpet, and the shout of the archangel, when God shall take down the shepherd's tent of this fading world, we shall not have so much as a shadow of all the dreams that we now build on. Alas! that the sharp and bitter blasts which meet us in this life, have not taught us mortification, and made us dead to this world! We buy our own sorrow, and we pay dear for it, when we spend our love, our joy, our desires, our confidence, on a handful of snow and ice, that time will melt away to nothing! Alas! that we inquire not for the clear fountain, but drink the poisoned waters till the night come, and then, when we awake in the morning of the resurrection, sick, sick, will many a soul be! I know no wholesome fountain but one, and I know not a thing worth the buying but heaven! But men profess Christ, and give out that he is their treasure and stock; and, in the mean time, praise of men, and a name, and ease, and the summer sun of the Gospel, is the profit they desire; so when the trial cometh, they quit the stock for the interest, and lose all. Happy are they who seek Christ for himself alone! I know, in your hard and heavy trials long since, you thought well and highly of Christ; but truly no cross should be old to us. We should not forget them because years are come betwixt us and them; we may make a cross which is old in time, new in use, and as fruitful as in the beginning of it. God is where and what he was seven years ago, whatever change be in us. I speak not this, as if I thought you had forgotten what God did long ago to win

your love, but that you may awake yourself in this sleepy age, and remember what Christ has done for you, and try if you have given him your love, or if it be yet to give him; for I find in myself that water runneth not faster through a sieve, than our warnings slip from us; for I have neglected many a summons the Lord sent to me, and therefore he hath given to me double. I bless his great name, who does not spare me, that he may save me from this perishing world. That God is so plentiful in means of this kind, is esteemed by many but unkind mercy; but Christ's cross is neither a cruel nor unkind mercy, but the token of a Father's love. God send me no worse than the sanctified cross of Christ portendeth, and I am sure I shall be happy and blessed. Pray for me. Remember my dearest love, in Christ, to your wife. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.

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### TO JOHN CLARK.

Loving Brother,

HOLD fast Christ without wavering, and "contend for the faith:" the lazy professor imagines heaven to be, as it were, at the next door, but truly it is not so easy a thing as most men believe, to reach heaven; Christ himself did "sweat great drops of blood," ere he won this city, although he was the free-born heir. It is Christianity, my

*To the PARISHIONERS of KILMACOLM.*

Worthy and well-beloved in Christ Jesus,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. Your letters find me under a great pressure of business—the kirk requiring the public help of us all; yet I cannot but answer the heads of both your letters, with provision that ye choose, henceforward, a fitter time for writing. 1st, I would not have you pitch upon me, as the man able by letters to answer doubts, while there are in your bounds men of such great parts most able for this work. I know the best are unable; yet it pleaseth the Spirit of Jesus at some times to breathe through a dry and empty reed, that the glory may be his only. 2d, Know that there is a time when this wind of the Spirit bloweth strong, and pierceth sharply, and this is most commonly under suffering for Christ, for Jesus is most tender of the sufferer, because he was a sufferer himself; but I leave this to answer yours.

1. You write, that God's vows are lying on you, and security strong, and of a kin to nature, stealing on you who are weak. I answer, nature is slothful, and loveth not the labour of religion: therefore rest should not be taken, till we know the disease be past the crisis—and then the quietness and the calms of the faith of victory over corruption, would be entertained in the place of security; so that if I sleep, I would desise to sleep faith's sleep in Christ's bosom.

2. Know also that none that sleep sound can seriously complain of sleepiness: sorrow for a slum-

bering soul is a token of some watchfulness of spirit: but this is soon turned into wantonness, (as grace in us too often is abused) therefore our waking must be watched over, else sleep will even grow out of watching: and there is as much need to watch over grace, as over sin; full men will soon sleep, and sooner than hungry men. 3d, For your weakness in resisting security, which like a thief stealeth upon you, I would say two things: 1. To be without complaints of weakness is for heaven and angels who never sinned, not for Christians in Christ's camp on earth. 2. I think it is our weakness that maketh us the church of the redeemed ones, and Christ's field, that the Mediator should labour in; if there were no diseases on earth, there needed no physician on earth. No man should rejoice at weakness and diseases; yet I think we may have a sort of gladness in them, because without them Christ's healing hand had not touched us. O how sweet is it for a sinner to put his weakness into Christ's strengthening hand, to resign his sick soul to such a physician, to lay his weakness before him, to weep upon him, and to plead and pray. Weakness can speak and cry, when we have not a tongue, "and when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood—I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Guiltiness out of measure spake, and drew out of Christ pity, and a word of life and love. 2. Ye tell me, that there is need of counsel for strengthening of new beginners. I can say little to that, who am not well begun myself; but I know honest beginnings are nourished by him who never

yet extinguished a poor man's dim candle, who is struggling between light and darkness. I am sure, if new beginners would urge themselves upon Christ, and press their souls upon him, and importune him, that they might taste this love, they would find that they cannot come amiss to him. 3. Whereas you complain of a dead ministry within your bounds, you are to remember, that the Bible among you is the contract of marriage; and the manner of Christ's conveying his love to your heart, is not so dependant upon even lively preaching, as that there is no conversion, no life of God, but that which is tied to a man's lips: the daughters of Jerusalem have often done that which the watchmen could not do. Make Christ your minister; he can woo a soul in the field; and needeth not us, howbeit the flock be obliged to seek him in the shepherds' tents—hunger of Christ's making may be satisfied, even under stewards who mind not the feeding of the flock. O blessed soul, that can look beyond a man, and above a pulpit, up to Christ—who can preach home to the heart, though we were all dead or dumb! 4. So to complain of yourself as to justify God, is right, providing you justify his Spirit in yourself; for men seldom plead against Satan's work, and sin in themselves, but against God's work in themselves; some of the people of God slander God's grace in their souls: "I have nothing, (say they) all is gone; the ground yieldeth but weeds;" whereas their gathered harvests, and springing corn, show them to be liars. But for myself, alas! this is not *my* sin; I have scarce wit to sin this sin: but I advise you to speak

good of Christ for his excellency, and to speak good of him for his grace to yourselves. 5. Light remaineth, you say, but you cannot attain to painfulness. See if this complaint be not booked in the New Testament: and the place is like this, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I know not." But every one hath not Paul's spirit in complaining; for often in us complaining, is but a false humility and traducing of Christ's new work in the soul. But for the matter of the complaint, I would say, the light of glory is perfectly obeyed in loving, and praising, and rejoicing, and resting in a seen and known Lord; but that light is not in us while we are in the flesh, though, while we are here, light is for the most part broader and longer than our narrow and short-coming obedience; but if there be light, and accompanied by armies of challenging thoughts, and sorrow for coming short of performance, in what we see and know ought to be performed, then that sorrow for not doing is accepted of our Lord for doing; our honest sorrow, and sincere aims, together with Christ's intercession, pleading that God would welcome that which we have, and forgive what we have not, must be our life, till we are past the boundary, and in that country where the law will get a perfect soul.

6. In Christ's absence there is, as you write, a willingness to use means, but heaviness after the use of them, because of the formal and slight performance. In Christ's absence, I confess the work laggeth; but if you mean absence of comfort, and absence of sense of his sweet presence, I think that

absence is Christ's trying of us, not simply our sin against him: therefore, though our obedience be not sweetened with joy, which all young Christians aim at, yet the less sense, and the more willingness in obeying, the less formality in our obedience; howbeit, we think not so. For I believe many think obedience formal and lifeless, except their souls be filled with joy and sense, and, like a ship fair before the wind, can spread no more sail; but I am not of their mind who think so. But if you mean, by absence of Christ, the withdrawing of his working grace, I see not how willingness to use means, can be at all under such an absence: therefore, be humbled for heaviness in that obedience, and thankful for willingness: for your Lord is working and helping more than you see. Also I recommend to you heaviness for formality, and for lifeless deadness in obedience; be cast down as much as you will or can, for deadness; and challenge that slow and dull body of sin, that will neither lead nor drive, in your spiritual obedience. O how dear to Jesus are complaints against corruption, and the body of sin! See how the Apostle cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Protestations against the law of sin in you, are warrants that sin shall have no law against you.

7. You hold, that Christ must either have hearty service, or no service at all; if you mean that he will not accept of half a heart, or have feigned service, such as the hypocrites give him, I grant you that; Christ must have sincerity or nothing. But if you



mean, he will have no service at all where the heart draweth back in any measure, I would not that were true, for my part of heaven, and all that I am worth in the world. Jesus knoweth our weakness, and our defects, and pitieth us when deadness in obedience is our cross and our burden.

8. The Enemy, as you write, who was a Liar from the beginning, challengeth your conversion as formal, yet you bless your Surety for the groundwork he hath laid, and dare not say, but you have assurance in some measure. To this I say, 1. It would be no fault, to save Satan's labour, and examine it yourself; but beware of Satan's aim, for he is minded to set you and Christ at variance. 2. Welcome faith in Jesus, who washeth still when we have defiled our souls; and seek the blood of atonement for all your faults, great or small; know the way to the well, and be much in it. 3. Make much of assurance, for it keepeth your anchor fixed.

9. Out-breakings, you say, discourage you, so that you know not, if ever you shall attain again in this life to such overjoying consolations of the Spirit, as you formerly had; and therefore it may be a question, whether, after assurance and mortification, the children of God be ordinarily fed with sense and joy? I answer, I see no objection to thinking it is enough in a race to see the gold at the starting-place, though we should not get another view of it till we reach the end of the course: yet I think it not lawful to seek renewed consolations, providing, 1. The heart be submissive, and content to leave the measure and timing of them to him. 2. Provided they be

sought to excite us to praise, and strengthen our assurance, and sharpen our desires after himself. 3. Let them be sought, not for our natural qualifications, but as the earnest of heaven: and I think many do attain to greater consolations after mortification, than ever they had formerly. As for the Lord's people with you, I am not the man fit to speak to them. I rejoice exceedingly Christ is engaging souls amongst you: but I know, in conversion, "all the winning is in the first buying," as we use to say; for many lay false foundations, and take up conversion hastily, and have never a sick night for sin. And this maketh loose work: I pray you dig deep. It were good that professors were not like young heirs, that come to their rich estate, long ere they come to their wit; and so it comes that the world steals their riches from them, ere ever they are aware what they are doing. I recommend to you conference and prayer at private meetings: for warrant whereof, see Isa. ii. 3. Jer. l. 4, 5. Hos. ii. 1, 2. Ezek. viii. 20—23. Mal. iii. 16. Luke xxiv. 13—17. John xx. 19. Acts xii. 12. 1st Pet. iv. 10. 1st Thess. v. 14. Heb. iii. 13. and x. 25. and it is a part of the communion of saints. I must entreat you, and your Christian acquaintances in the parish, to remember me to God in your prayers, and my flock and ministry. For want of time I have put you all in one letter. The rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, August 15, 1629.

## To JOHN KENNEDY.

My loving and most affectionate Brother in Christ,

I SALUTE you with grace, merey, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I promised to write to you, and although late enough, I now make it good. I heard with grief of your great danger of perishing by the sea, but of your merciful deliverance with joy. Sure I am, Satan will leave no stone unturned, (as the proverb is,) to roll you off your rock, or at least to shake and unsettle you: for at the same time, the mouths of wicked men were opened in hard speeches against you by land, and the Prince of the power of the air opposed you by sea; but, blessed be God, his arm is short: if the sea and winds would have obeyed him, you had never come to land. Thank your God, who saith, "I have the keys of hell and of death—I kill and make alive—The Lord bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." You were knocking at the black doors of death and of the grave, but you found them shut; and we do all welcome you back again. I trust you know it is not for nothing, that you are sent to us again; the Lord knew that your armour was not yet thick enough against the stroke of death. Now, in the strength of Jesus, despatch your business; that debt is not forgiven, but delayed; death hath not bidden you farewell, but hath left you only for a short season. End your journey ere the night come upon you; have all in readiness against the time that you must pass through that

black and impetuous Jordan, and Jesus, Jesus will be your pilot; the last tide will not wait for you one moment. What you do amiss in your life to-day, you may amend to-morrow: for as many suns as God maketh to rise upon you, you have as many new lives; but you can die but once. You see how the number of your days is written in God's book, and, as one of the Lord's hirelings, you must work till the shadow of the evening come upon you. Fulfil your course with joy; for we take nothing to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience; and although the sky clear after this storm, yet clouds will engender another. You contracted with Christ, I hope, when first you began to follow him, that you would bear the cross; fulfil your part of the contract with patience: be honest, brother, in your engagements with Christ; for who knoweth better how to bring up children than our God? he makes no exception of any of his children, Rev. iii. 19. Heb. xii. 7, 8. No—his eldest Son, and his Heir, Jesus, is not excepted, Heb. ii. 10. Suffer we must; ere we were born, God decreed it; and it is easier to complain of his decree, than to change it. It is true, terrors of conscience cast us down; and yet without terrors of conscience we cannot be raised up again; fears and doubtings shake us; and yet without fears and doubtings, we should soon sleep and lose our hold of Christ: temptations and tribulations will almost loosen us at the root; and yet without tribulations and temptations, we can now no more grow, than herbs or corn without rain. Sin and Satan, and the world will say in our ear, that

we have a hard reckoning to make in judgment; and yet none of these three can, without falsehood, say, that our sin can change the tenor of the new covenant. Forward then, dear brother, and lose not your hold; I wish that I, and you, and all that love our common Saviour, may be united in love with the Son of God; so that we might say, "Now, if we were never so willing to escape out of Christ's hands, yet love has so bound us in his chains, that the grave nor death cannot break them." I hope, brother, yea, I doubt not of it, that you lay me, and my flock, and my entry to the Lord's vineyard, before Him who hath put me in his work: the Lord knoweth that since first I saw you, I have been mindful of you. Marion M'Naught doth remember most heartily her love to you, and to John Stewart. Blessed be the Lord, that in God's mercy I found in this country such a woman, to whom Jesus is dearer than her own heart. Good brother, call to mind the memory of your worthy father, now asleep in Christ; and as his custom was, pray continually for the life of the kirk. Now, I commend you, your whole soul, and body, and spirit, to Jesus Christ and his keeping, hoping you will die and live, stand and fall, with the cause of our Master, Jesus. The Lord Jesus himself be with your spirit.

Your loving brother in our Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, February 2, 1632.

TO MR. HENRY STEWART, *his WIFE, and TWO*  
*DAUGHTERS; all Prisoners at Dublin.*

Rev. iii. 10. "Fear none of these things, which ye shall  
 suffer," &c.

Truly honoured, and dearly beloved,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you, from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Think it not strange, beloved, that Satan has power to cast you into prison: this is part of the dominion that he hath over this world. Interpret and understand our Lord well in this; be not jealous of his love, though he thus permit devils and men to be his agents, to purge you of your dross; and let me charge you, O prisoners of hope, to look out by faith to that speedy and swift salvation of God, which is coming to you. That is a broad river, which faith may not look over; it is a mighty and a broad sea, whose farthest banks and shores cannot be beheld by those of a lively hope. Look over the water; your anchor is fixed within the vail, "whither the forerunner, Christ, is entered for you." Oh, but we have short, and narrow, and creeping thoughts of Jesus, and do but shape Christ in our conceptions, according to some created portraiture! Lend us your help, O ye glorified indwellers of earth and heaven, sea and air, that we may set on high the praises of our Lord; let all creature-beauty blush before his uncreated beauty! let all created strength stand amazed, before the strength of the Lord of hosts! let all created love be ashamed before the unparalleled love of

Heaven ! O angel of wisdom, hide thyself before our Lord, whose understanding passeth finding out ! Sun, in thy shining beauty, vail thyself in darkness before the brightness of thy Master and Maker ! Who can add glory, by doing or suffering, to our never-enough admired and praised Lord ! Keep your love to Christ, lay up your faith in Heaven's keeping, and follow the Chief of the house of martyrs, that witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate : let faith live and breathe, and lay hold on the sure salvation of God, when clouds and darkness are about you. Take heed of unbelieving hearts ; beware of, " Doth his promise fail for evermore ? " for it was a man and not God that said it, and who dreamed that a promise of God could fail. O sweet and strong word of faith, " Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him ! " The eyes of faith can see through the clouds, and read God's thoughts of love and peace. Hold fast Christ in the dark ; surely ye shall see the salvation of God. I confess, it should beseem men of great parts, rather than me, to write to you ; but I love your cause, and desire to be excused, and must entreat for the help of your prayers in this my weighty charge here, for the university and pulpit, and that you would entreat your acquaintance also to help me. Grace be with you all. Amen.

S. R.

St. Andrews, 1640.

To MR. JAMES WILSON.

Dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy and peace be multiplied upon you. I am not so fit a physician as your case requireth: I have little time, but yet the Lord hath made me so concern myself in your condition, that I dare not be altogether silent. First you doubt "whether you be in Christ or not;" and so, "whether you be a reprobate or not." I answer three things to the doubt. 1. You owe charity to all men, and some also to yourself, especially to your renewed self, because your new self is not yours, but the Lord's, even the work of his own Spirit; therefore, to slander his work, is to wrong himself. If you love grace, think not ill of grace in yourself; and you do think ill of grace in yourself, when you make it but a work of nature. A holy fear lest you be not Christ's, and withal a care and desire to be his, and not your own, is not, nay, cannot be, mere nature. The great Advocate pleadeth hard for you; be upon the Advocate's side, O poor and fearful client of Christ! That he pleadeth for you, your letter, though too full of jealousy, is a proof; for if you were not his, your thoughts, which I hope are but the suggestions of his Spirit, (that only bringeth the matter in debate, to make it sure to you,) would not be such, nor so serious as these, Am I His? or, whose am I? 2. Dare you deny your owner, and say deliberately, I am not his? What nature or corruption saith at times in you, I regard not: your



thoughts of yourself, when sin and guiltiness make themselves heard, and when you have a sight of your demerits, are apocrypha, and not Scripture, I hope. Hear what the Lord saith of you, He will speak peace. If your Master say, I quit you, I shall then bid you eat ashes for bread, and drink waters of gall and wormwood. But though Christ out of his own mouth should seem to say, "I came not for thee," as he did, Matth. xv. 24. yet, let me say, these words are not to be stretched as Scripture beyond his intention, seeing his intention in speaking them, is to strengthen, not to deceive; and therefore, here faith may contradict what Christ seemeth at first to say, and so may you. 3. You say, that you know not what to do. Your Master said once that same word, or not far from it—"Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?"—and faith answered the tempted Saviour with these words, Say, "Pray, Father, save me from this hour." What course can you take, but pray, and wait for Christ's own comforts? Oh, (say you,) I cannot pray. Answer: Honest sighing is faith breathing. The life is not out of faith, where there is sighing, looking up with the eyes, and breathing towards God, as in Lam. iii. 36. "Hide not thine ear at my breathing." But you say, What shall I do in spiritual exercises? I answer, 1. If you knew particularly what to do, it were not a spiritual exercise. 2. In my weak judgment, you would first say, I will glorify God, in believing David's salvation, and the Bride's marriage with the Lamb, although I cannot for the present

believe mine own salvation. 3. Say, I will not pass from my claim; though my love to Christ be nothing worth, yet, such as it is, he shall have it. 4. Say, Let my broken words go up to heaven; when they come up into the great Angel's golden censer, that compassionate Advocate will put together my broken prayers, and perfume them. Words are but accents of prayer. But, you say, you are slain with hardness of heart, and troubled with confused and melancholy thoughts. My dear brother, what would you conclude thence? that you know not whose you are? That were good logic in heaven, amongst angels and the glorified; but here, where sick and distempered souls are under cure, it is worth nothing: give Christ time to finish his work in your heart; hold on in feeling and bewailing your hardness, for to feel hardness is a proof of softness. 2. I charge you to sing Christ's praises, for his begun work of grace. Make Christ your music and your song; for complaining and feeling of want doth often swallow up your praises. Lend Christ your melancholy, for Satan hath no right to make a chamber in your melancholy; borrow joy and comfort from the Comforter; bid the Spirit do his office in you; and remember that faith is one thing, and the feeling and notice of faith another: God forbid, that this were good reasoning, No feeling, no grace. But, alaa! dear brother, it is easy for me to speak words and syllables of peace, but Isaiah telleth you, "I create peace"—there is but one Creator, you know. Oh that you may get a message of peace sent you from

heaven! Pray for me, and for grace to be faithful, and gifts to be able with tongue and pen to glorify God. I forget you not.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

St. Andrews, Jan. 8, 1640.

*To* LADY BOYD.

Madam,

I RECEIVED your Ladyship's letter; but because I was still going through the country for the affairs of the church, I have had no time to answer it. I had never more cause to fear than I have now, when my Lord hath restored me to my second created heaven on earth, and hath turned my apprehended fears into joys. Alas! that weeping prayers, answered and sent back from heaven with joy, should not have laughing praises,—that mercy should so beguile, and steal away our acknowledgments! I hope your Ladyship is at a good understanding with Christ, and that, as becometh a Christian, you take him aright (for many mistake Christ) in his comings and goings; your wants and falls proclaim you have nothing of your own, (nay, yourself is not your own,) but Christ hath given himself to you: let Christ dwell in you, and abide ye in him. Christ will make your losses grace's great advantage. I hope you fetch all the heaven you have here in this life, from that which is above; and that your anchor is cast as high and deep as Christ. If I had known long

since, as I do now, (though still, alas ! I am ignorant,) what was in Christ, I should not have been so long in starting to the gate to seek him. Oh, what can I do or say to him, who hath thus restored me ! Wo is me, that my foolish sorrow and unbelief were so witless of my Lord's providence ; but when my faith was asleep, Christ was awake ; and now, when I am awake, I say, He did all things well. Oh, infinite wisdom ! oh, incomparable loving kindness ! Alas, that the heart I have is so little and worthless for such a Lord as Christ is ! What a difference saints, when they have sap at their roots, find between themselves and withered professors ! Crosses and storms cause them to cast their blooms and leaves ; poor worldlings, what will you do when your short day's laughter is ended ? Madam, I wish you to be builded more and more upon the stone laid in Zion, and may the God of peace be with your Ladyship, and keep you blameless till the day of our Lord Jesus. Your Ladyship's at all obedience in his dear Lord and Master,

S. R.

St. Andrews.

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*To his very Dear Friend, JOHN FENNICK.*

Much-honoured and dear Friend,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. The necessary impediments of my calling have hitherto prevented me from making a return to your letter, the heads of which I shall now briefly answer—As, 1.

I approve your going to the Fountain when your own cistern is dry; and it is needful for you, that your own cistern be dry sometimes, that you may learn the difference between the well of Christ's salvation, and all borrowed waters. But why do you complain of waters going over your soul, and that the terrors of a wrathful Lord do almost bring you to death's brink? If your sense and apprehension be made judge of his love, there is a graven image made presently, and He is made to appear your foe, who, "when you washed your steps with butter, and the rock poured you out rivers of oil," was felt to be your friend.

Let God work; you never, since you were a man, had such a fair field for faith, for apprehension of wrath is faith's opportunity: now see if yours be faith indeed, if you can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." See now if you can prevail with God, like him who "by his strength had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed." It will be a great victory to believe the salvation of the Lord in the dark; but that your troubles are many at once, and arrows come in from all quarters, from country, friends, wife, children, foes, estate, and even direct from the hand of God, who is the hope and stay of your soul, I confess is much, and very heavy to be borne, yet all these are not more than your troubles are many and great, yet not beyond the measure of infinite wisdom, nor of the grace, I hope, he is to bestow; for our Lord never yet spoiled his own work: nature's counterfeit work he doth often break in pieces; but he will

cherish his own reeds, and deal gently with them. Cast your disjointed spirit on his bosom, and lay your burden upon one, who is so willing to take your cares and your fears from you, and to give you new for old, and gold for iron, even "the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness." I am sorry to hear you speak in your letter of God's anger, and a sense of his indignation. Indeed, apprehended wrath flameth out of such ashes as apprehended sin. But let it be that you are a man, and have the deserving of a man, and the sin of one who hath suffered the well-beloved to slip away—nay, hath refused him entrance when he was knocking. Yet put more honest apprehensions upon Christ, and do not, through the vail of your unbelief, behold him as measuring his love by your sinful deservings and demerits. O no! Christ is man, but he is not like man. He hath man's love in heaven, but it is lusted with God's love; and it is very God's love you have to do with. Wait on till he return with salvation, and cause you to rejoice in the latter end. It is not much to complain, but rather believe than complain; and sit in the dust, and close your mouth, till he make your sown light grow again: for your afflictions are not eternal: time will end them, and so shall you at length see the Lord's salvation. His love sleepeth not, but is still working for you. His salvation will not tarry nor linger: your Lord's wisdom and love chose out this cross for you—take it willingly, and make use of it; and let the fruit and flower of it be that you be dead to time, to earth, to gold, to country, to friends, wife, children and all

created nothings; for in them there is no seat for your soul's love. God gave much for your soul; and blessed are you if you have a love for him, and can call in your soul's love from all idols, and make a God of God—a God of Christ. If your afflicted soul finds ease by means of God's choosing, rather than of your own wishing, the former, I am sure, is best, and the comfort strongest and sweetest. Let the Lord have the absolute ordering of your evils and troubles: recommend your cross and your furnace to him, who hath skill to melt his own metal, and knoweth well what to do with his furnace: let your heart be willing that his fire should consume all your tin, and brass, and dross: to consent to be freed of corruption is a greater mercy than many professors do well know; and to refer the manner of God's cure to his own wisdom, is a great point of faith. The cup of glory shall wash away the memory of all this, and make it as nothing; only now let patience have her perfect work, for this haste is your infirmity.

Sir, my employments being so great, hinder my writing more at length; excuse me; I hope to be mindful of you. I shall be obliged to you if you help me with your prayers for this people, this college, and my own poor soul. Grace be with you. Remember my love to your wife.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

St. Andrews, Feb. 13, 1640.

**TO LADY FINGASK.**

**Madam,**

**GRACE**, mercy and peace be to you. Though not acquainted, yet, at the desire of a Christian, I make bold to write a line or two unto you, by way of counsel, (howbeit I be most unfit for that). I hear, and I bless the Father of lights for it, that your spirit is set to seek God, and that the posture of your heart is to look heaven-ward, which is the work of the Mediator Christ's right hand; for the which I would have your Ladyship to see a tie and bond of obedience laid upon you, that all may be done, not so much from obligation of law, as from the tie of free love; that the law of ransom paid by Christ may be the chief ground of all your obedience, seeing that you are not under the law, but under grace. Know withal, that unbelief is a spiritual sin, and so not seen by nature's light; and that all conscience saith is not Scripture. Suppose your heart bear witness against you for sins long ago, yet many have pardon with God that have not peace with themselves; and you are to stand and fall by Christ's esteem and judgment of you, and not by that which your heart saith.

Worthy Lady, I would have you to hold by this, that the love of your heavenly Bridegroom standeth firm and sure; and let faith hang by this small thread, that he loved you before he laid the corner-stone of the world, and therefore he cannot change his mind, because he is God, and rests in his love.



Neither is sin in you a good reason wherefore you should doubt of him, or think because sin has made you liable to his justice, that therefore he is wroth with you; neither is it presumption in you to lay the burden of your salvation upon One mighty to save, if so be you lay aside all confidence in yourself—your worth and righteousness. True faith is humble, and seeth no way to escape but only in Christ. I believe you highly esteem Christ; and they cannot but believe, and so be saved, who love Christ, and to whom he is precious: nay, he hath prevented you in that; for you have not chosen him, but he hath chosen you. O consider, that there is nothing which can commend and make fair heaven, or earth, or the creature, that is not in him in infinite perfection; and the more you drink of his love, there is the more room, and the greater desire and delight for it. But, alas! what do I? I but lose words in speaking highly of him who is above the songs of heaven, and will never be enough praised by us all; to whose boundless love I recommend you, and am,  
Your Ladyship's in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

St. Andrews, March 27, 1640.

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*To his Rev. and Dear Brother, MR. DAVID DICK-  
SON.*

Reverend and dear Brother,

You look like the house whereof you are a branch: the cross is a part of the life-rent that lieth

to all the sons of the house. I desire to suffer with you, if I could ease you of a share of your trial; but you have preached it ere I knew any thing of God, that he is Lord of the harvest, and may gather in his own at what season he pleaseth. You are taught to know and adore his sovereignty which he exerciseth over you, which yet is lusted with mercy. Your child hath but changed his garden, and is planted higher up, nearer the sun, where he will thrive better than in this out-field.- I read in this bereavement an exaltation and richer measure of grace, as the sweet fruit of your cross; and I am bold to say, that that college, where your Master hath set you now, shall find it. It is better than any ancient or modern commentary on the text you preached on in Glasgow: read and spell right, for he knoweth what he doth. He is only lopping and pruning a fruit-tree, that it may be more fruitful.

Dearest brother, go on and faint not: something of yours is now in heaven, and you follow on after your own; and you will live, and triumph, and reign, and be more than conqueror: for your Captain, who leadeth you on, is more than conqueror, and he makes you partaker of his conquest and victory. Did not love to you compel me, I would not thus speak to one who knoweth better than me what God is doing with him.

Remember my love to your wife, to Mr. John, and all friends there. Let us be helped by your prayers, for I cease not to make mention of you to the Lord.

Grace be with you,

S. R.

St. Andrews, May 28, 1640.

## To LADY BOYD.

Madam,

IMPUTE it not to a disrespectful forgetfulness of your Ladyship, who ministered to me in my bonds, that I write not to you. I wish I could speak or write what might do you good, especially now, when I think you cannot but have deep thoughts of the fathomless ways of our Lord, in taking away, with a sudden and wonderful stroke, your brethren and friends. You may know, all that die for sin, die not in sin; and that none can teach the Almighty knowledge: no man can say unto him, "What dost thou?" It is true, your brothers saw not many summers; but adore and fear the sovereignty of him who, as a potter, doth with his clay vessels whatsoever pleaseth him, and whensoever. This world, and all that it contains, is absolutely his own. O what wisdom is it to believe and not to dispute; to subject the thoughts to his will, and not to repine at any act of his justice! He hath done it—let all flesh be silent. It is impossible to be submissive and religiously patient, if you suffer your thoughts to dwell among the confused rollings and wheels of second causes; as, O, the place! O, the time! O, if this had been, this had not followed! O, the linking of this accident with this time and place! Look up to the Master-mover, and the first cause: see and read the decree of the Creator of men, who appointeth death to his children, and the manner of it. They see far who can understand his ways: "How unsearchable are

his judgments, and his ways past finding out !” Yet were they not the greatest sinners on whom the tower of Siloam fell. I dare not deny but “ the king of terrors dwelleth in the wicked man’s tabernacle: brimstone shall be scattered on his habitation;” yet, Madam, it is safe for you to live upon the faith of his love, whose arrows are pointed with mercy to his own, and who knoweth how to take you and yours out of the roll and book of the dead. Seeing you “ are not under the law, but under grace,” wrath is not the court that you are liable to. As I would not wish, neither do I believe, your Ladyship doth despise, so neither faint; and I hope you have resolved, that if he should grind you to powder, your dust shall believe his salvation. And who can tell what thoughts of love and peace our Lord hath to your children? What is wrath to others, is mercy to you and your house. It is faith’s part to claim and challenge loving-kindness out of all the roughest strokes of God. Do that for the Lord which you will do for time: time will calm your heart at that which God hath done, and let our Lord have it now. What love you did bear to friends now dead, let it be set upon Christ. It is much for our half-slain affections to part with that we believe we have right unto; but the servant’s will should be our will, and he is the best servant who retaineth least of his own will, and most of his master’s. Our Lord knoweth how to lead his own through the trials of time: and seeing his mountains of brass, the mighty and strong decrees of free grace in Christ, stand sure, and the covenant standeth fast for ever as the days of heaven,

though he strike, his striking must be a very act of saving; for strokes upon his chosen ones come from the gentle hand of the heavenly Mediator, and his rods are steeped in that river of love that floweth from the heart of our soul-redeeming Jesus. Be content, and withal greedily covetous of grace, the interest and pledge of glory. Seeing that time's thread is short, and you are upon the entry of heaven's harvest, the losses that I write of to your Ladyship are but summer showers, and the Sun of the new Jerusalem shall quickly dry them up, and the rains of affliction cannot stain the image of God upon your soul, or alter the colour of his grace: and since you will not forsake him who will not forsake you, I dare prophesy that day-light is near, when such a morning-darkness is upon you; and that this trial of your Christian mind towards him, whom you dare not leave, though he should slay you, shall close with a double mercy. It is a time for faith to hold more fast by Christ, and cleave more closely to him than ever; for Christ loveth to be believed in and trusted to. The glory of laying strength upon One mighty to save, is more than we can think. That piece of service, of believing in a smiting Redeemer, is a precious part of obedience: it is glory to him, when we lay our burdens upon him who purchased for us an eternal kingdom. Blessed the soul who can adore and prize his free grace. The rich grace of Christ be with your spirit.

Yours in all obedience in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

St. Andrews, Oct. 15, 1640.

*To MRS. TAYLOR.*

**Mistress,**

**GRACE**, mercy and peace be to you. Though I have no worldly relation or acquaintance with you, yet, (upon the testimony and importunity of your elder son, now at London, where I am, but chiefly because I esteem Jesus Christ in you to be in place of all relations,) I make bold in Christ to speak my poor thoughts to you concerning your son lately fallen asleep in the Lord, who was some time under the ministry of the worthy servant of Christ, my fellow-labourer, Mr. Blair, by whose ministry I hope he reaped no small advantage. I know grace rooteth not out the affections of a mother, but putteth them on his wheel, who maketh all things new, that they may be refined; therefore, sorrow for a dead child is allowed to you, though by measure and ounce weights. The redeemed of the Lord have not a dominion or lordship over their sorrow and other affections, to lavish out Christ's goods at their pleasure; "For ye are not your own, but bought with a price;" and your sorrow is not your own, nor hath he redeemed you by halves; and therefore ye are not to make Christ's cross no cross. He commandeth you to weep; and that princely One, who took up to heaven with him a man's heart, to be a compassionate High-priest, became your fellow and companion on earth, by weeping for the dead, John xi. 35. The worst things of Christ, even his cross, have much of heaven from himself;

and so hath your Christian sorrow, being of kin to Christ's in that kind. If your sorrow were not of Christ's house, because of the relation you have to him, in conformity with his death and sufferings, I should the more compassionate your condition; but kind and compassionate Jesus, at every sigh you give for the loss of your now glorified child, (so I believe, as is meet,) with a man's heart crieth, Half-mine. I was not a witness to his death, being called out of the kingdom; but you shall credit those whom I do credit, (and I dare not lie,) he died comfortably. It is true, he died before he did so much service to Christ on earth, as I hope and heartily desire, your son Mr. Hugh (very dear to me in Jesus Christ) shall do. But that were a real matter of sorrow, if this were not to counterbalance it, that he hath changed service-houses, but hath not changed service or Master: Rev. xxii. 3. "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him." What he could have done in this lower house, he is now upon that same service in the higher house: and it is all one, it is the same service, and the same Master, only there is a change of conditions. And ye are not to think it a bad bargain for your beloved son, where he hath gold for copper and brass, eternity for time. I believe Christ hath taught you (for I give credit to such a witness of you, as your son Mr. Hugh,) not to sorrow because he died. All the knot must be, he died too soon, he died too young, he died in the morning of his life; this is all; but sovereignty must silence your thoughts.

I was in your condition; I had but two children, and both are dead since I came hither. The supreme and absolute Former of all things, giveth not an account of any of his matters. The good husbandman may pluck his roses, and gather in his lilies at mid-summer, and, for aught I dare say, in the beginning of the first summer-month; and he may transplant young trees out of the lower ground to the higher, where they have more of the sun, and a more free air, at any season of the year. What is that to you or me? the goods are his own. The Creator of time and winds did a merciful injury, if I dare borrow the word, to nature, in landing the passenger so early. They love the sea too well, who complain of a fair wind and a desirable tide, and a speedy coming ashore, especially a coming ashore in that land where all the inhabitants have everlasting joy upon their heads. He cannot be too early in heaven; his twelve hours were not short hours. And withal, if you consider this, had you been at his bed-side, and should have seen Christ coming to him, you would not, you could not have adjourned Christ's free love, who would want him no longer. And dying in another land, where his mother could not close his eyes, is not much. The whole earth is his Father's; any corner of his Father's house is good enough to die in. It may be, the living child (I speak not of Mr. Hugh) is more grief to you than the dead. You are to wait on, if at any time God shall give him repentance: Christ waited as long possibly on you and I, certainly longer on me: and if he should deny repentance to



him, I could say something to that; but I hope better things of him. It seemeth that Christ will have this world your step-dame: I love not your condition the worse; it may be a proof that you are not a child of this lower house, but a stranger. Christ seeth it not good only, but your only good, to be led thus to heaven; and think this a favour, that he hath bestowed upon you free, free grace, that is, mercy without hire; ye paid nothing for it: and who can put a price upon any thing of royal and princely Jesus Christ? And that God hath given to you to suffer for him the spoiling of your goods, esteem it as an act of free grace also: you are no loser, having himself; and I persuade myself, if you could prize Christ, nothing could be bitter to you. Grace, grace be with you.

Your brother and well-wisher,

S. R.

London, 1645.

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To BARBARA HAMILTON.

Worthy Friend,

GRACE be to you. I do unwillingly write unto you of that which God hath done concerning your son-in-law; only I believe, you look not below Christ, and the highest and most supreme act of Providence, which moveth all wheels. We see God's decrees, when they bring forth their fruits, all actions, good and ill, sweet and sour, in their time; but we see not presently the after-birth of

God's decree, namely, his blessed end, and the good that he bringeth out of his holy and spotless counsel. We see sorrow: the end of his counsel and working lieth hidden and underneath the ground, and therefore we cannot believe. Even amongst men, we see hewn stones, timber, and a hundred scattered parcels and pieces of a house, all under tools, hammers, and axes, and saws; yet the house, the beauty and ease of so many lodgings and rooms, we neither see nor understand for the present,—these are but in the mind and head of the builder, as yet. We see red earth, unbroken clods, furrows, and stones; but we see not summer lilies, roses, and the beauty of a garden. If ye give the Lord time to work, (as often he that believeth not maketh haste, but not speed,) his end is under the ground; and ye shall see it was your good, that your son hath changed dwelling-places, but not his Master. Christ thought good to have no more of his service here, yet, Rev. xxii. 3. "His servants shall serve him." He needeth not us nor our service, either in earth or in heaven; but ye are to look to Him who giveth the hireling both his leave and his wages; for his naked aim and purpose to serve Christ, as well as for his labours, it is put up in Christ's account. Such a labourer did sweat forty years in Christ's vineyard; howbeit he got not leave to labour so long, because he who accepteth of the will for the deed, counteth so. None can teach the Lord to lay an account; he numbereth the drops of rain, and knoweth the stars by their names. It would take us much studying, to give a name to every star in the firmament,

great or small. See Lev. x. 8. "And Aaron held his peace:" ye know his two sons were slain, whilst they offered strange fire to the Lord. Command your thoughts to be silent; hear the rod, what it preacheth; and see the name of God, Micah vi. 9. and know that there is somewhat of God and heaven in the rod. The majesty of the unsearchable and bottomless ways and judgments of God is not seen in the rod; and the seeing of them requireth the eyes of the man of wisdom. But he can do no wrong, he cannot halt; his goings are equal, who hath done it. I know our Lord aimeth at more mortification; let him not come in vain to your house, and lose the pains of a merciful visit. God, the Founder, never melteth in vain; howbeit, to us, he seemeth often to lose both fire and metal. But I know ye are more in this work than I can be. There is no cause to faint or weary. Grace be with you; and the rich consolations of Jesus Christ sweeten your cross, and support you under it. I rest,

Yours in his Lord and Master,

S. R.

London, Oct. 15, 1645.

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TO MRS. HUME.

Loving Sister,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. If you have any thing better than the husband of your youth, you are Jesus Christ's debtor for it; pay not then your debts with grudging. Sorrow may dimi-

nish from the sweet fruit of righteousness ; but quietness, silence, submission, and faith, put a crown upon your sad losses. You know whose voice the voice of a crying rod is, Micah vi. 9. The name and majesty of the Lord is written on the rod ; read, and be instructed. Let Christ have the room of the husband ; he hath now no need of you, or of your love, for he enjoyeth as much of the love of Christ, as his heart can be capable of. I confess it is a dear-bought experience, to teach you to undervalue the creature ; yet it is not too dear, if Christ think it so. I know, that the disputing of your thoughts against his going thither, the way and manner of his death, the instruments, the place, the time, will not ease your spirits, except ye rise higher than second causes, and be silent, because the Lord hath done it. If we measure the goings of the Almighty, and his ways, the bottom whereof we see not, we quite mistake God. O how little a portion of God see we ! He is far above our narrow thoughts ; he ruled the world in wisdom, ere we, creatures of yesterday, were born ; and shall rule it, when we shall be lodging beside the worms and corruption. Only learn heavenly wisdom, self-denial, and mortification, by this sad loss : I know, that it is not for nothing (except you deny God to be wise in all he doth,) that you have lost one in earth. There hath been too little of your love and heart in heaven, and therefore the jealousy of Christ hath done this. It is a mercy that he contendeth with you and all your lovers : I should desire no greater favour for myself, than that Christ laid a necessity, and took on such

bonds upon himself: such a one I must have, and such a soul I cannot live in heaven without: John x. 16. If with the eyes of wisdom, as a child of wisdom, ye justify your mother, the wisdom of God, (whose child you are,) you shall kiss and embrace this loss, and see much of Christ in it. Believe and submit, and refer the income of the consolations of Jesus, and the event of the trial, to your heavenly Father, who numbereth all your hairs: and put Christ in his own room in your love; it may be, he hath either been out of his own place, or in a place of love inferior to his worth. Repair Christ in all his wrongs done to him, and love him for a husband; and he that is "a husband to the widow," shall be that to you, which he hath taken from you. Grace be with you.

Your sympathizing brother,

S. R.

London, Oct. 15, 1645.

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To BARBARA HAMILTON.

Loving Sister,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. I have heard with grief, that Newcastle hath taken one more in a bloody account, than before, even your son-in-law, and my friend; but I hope you have learned that much of Christ, as not to look to wheels rolled round about on earth. Earthen vessels are not to dispute with their Former: pieces of sinning clay may, by reasoning and contending with the Potter, mar the work of him "who hath his fire

in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem;" as bullocks, sweating and wrestling in the furrow, maketh their yoke more heavy. In quietness and rest, you shall be saved. If men do any thing contrary to your heart, we may ask both, Who did it? and, What is done? and, Why? When God hath done any such thing, we are to inquire who hath done it, and to know that this cometh from the Lord, "who is wonderful in counsel;" but we are not to ask what or why. If it be from the Lord, (as certainly there is no evil in the city without him, Amos iii. 6.) it is enough; the fairest face of his spotless way is but coming, and you are to believe his works as well as his word. It maketh not much, what way we go to heaven; the happy home is all, where the roughness of the way shall be forgotten. He is gone home to a Friend's house, and made welcome, and the race is ended; time is recompensed with eternity. God's order is in wisdom; the husband goes home before the wife, and the throng of the market shall be over, ere it be long, and another generation where we now are; and at length an empty house, and not one of mankind shall be upon the earth within the sixth part of an hour, after the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up with fire. I fear more that Christ is about to remove, when he carrieth home so much of his plenishing before-hand. We cannot teach the Almighty knowledge; when he was directing the bullet against his servant, to fetch out the soul, no wise man could cry to God, Wrong, wrong, Lord, for he is thine own! There is no mist over his eyes, who is "wonderful in

counsel:" if Zion be built with your son-in-law's blood, the Lord (deep in counsel) can glue together the stones of Zion with blood, and with that blood which is precious in his eyes. Christ hath fewer labourers in his vineyard than he had, but some more witnesses for his cause, and the Lord's covenant with the three nations. What is Christ's gain, is not your loss: let not that which is his holy and wise will be your unbelieving sorrow. Though I really judge I had interest in his dead servant, yet, because he now liveth to Christ, I quit the hopes I had of his successful labouring in the ministry. I know he now praiseth the grace that he was to preach; and if there were a better thing on his head now in heaven than a crown, or any thing more excellent than heaven, he would cast it down before his feet who sitteth on the throne. Give glory, therefore, to Christ, as he now doth, and say, "Thy will be done." The grace and consolation of Christ be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

London, Nov. 15, 1645.

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*To a CHRISTIAN FRIEND, on the Death of his Wife.*

Worthy Friend,

I DESIRE to suffer with you, in the loss of a loving and good wife, now gone before (according to the method and order of Him, of whose understanding

there is no searching out) whither you are to follow. He that made yesterday to go before this day, and the former generation, in birth and life, to have been before this present generation, and hath made some flowers to grow, and die, and wither in the month of May, and others in June, cannot be challenged in the order he hath made of things without souls; and some order he must keep also here, that one might bury another; therefore, I hope, you shall be dumb and silent, because the Lord hath done it. What creatures or under-causes do in sinful mistakes, are ordered in wisdom by your Father, at whose feet your own soul and your heaven lieth, and so the days of your wife. If the place she hath left were any other than a prison of sin, and the home she is gone to any other than where her Head and Saviour is King of the land, your grief had been more rational; but I trust, your faith of the resurrection of the dead in Christ to glory and immortality, will lead you to suspend your longing for her, till the morning and dawning of that day, when the archangel shall descend with a shout, to gather all his prisoners out of the grave up to himself. To believe this is best for you, and to be "silent, because he hath done it," is your wisdom. It is much to come out of the Lord's school of trial, wiser and more experienced in the ways of God. Christ hath skill to do, and (if our corruption mar not) the art of mercy in correcting. We cannot of ourselves take away the tin, the lead, and the scum that remaineth in us; and if the furnace go alone, and Christ, the Master of the work, be not standing nigh the melting of his own vessel,



the labour were lost, and the founder should melt in vain. God knoweth, some of us have cost much fire and pains to our Lord Jesus; and the vessel is almost marred, the furnace and rod of God split, and the reprobate metal not taken away, so as some are to answer to the Majesty of God for the abuse of many good crosses, and rich afflictions lost, without the quiet fruit of righteousness: and it is a sad thing, when the rod is cursed that never fruit shall grow on it: and except Christ's dew fall down, and his summer-sun shine, and his grace follow afflictions, to cause them bring forth fruit to God, they are so fruitless to us, that our evil ground, rank and fat enough for briers, casteth up a crop of noisome weeds. "The rod," as the prophet saith, Ezek. vii. 10, 11, "blossometh, pride buddeth forth, violence riseth up into a rod of wickedness;" and all this hath been my case under many rods since I saw you. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

London, 1645.

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*To a CHRISTIAN BROTHER.*

Reverend and beloved in the Lord,

It may be I have been too long silent, but I hope you will not impute it to forgetfulness of you. As I have heard of the death of your daughter, with heaviness of mind on your behalf; so I am much comforted, that she hath evidenced to yourself and

other witnesses, the hope of the resurrection of the dead. As sown corn is not lost, so also is it in the resurrection of the dead; the body is "sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory." I hope you wait for the crop and harvest, 1 Thess. iv. 14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." Then they are not lost, who are gathered into that congregation of the first-born, and the general assembly of the saints. Though we cannot outrun nor overtake them that are gone before, yet we shall quickly follow them; and the difference is, that she hath the advantage of some months or years of the crown, before you and her mother. And we do not take it ill, if our children outrun us in the life of grace; why then are we sad, if they outstrip us in the attainment of the life of glory? It would seem, that there is more reason to grieve that children live behind us, than that they are glorified and die before: all the difference is in some poor hungry accidents of time, less or more, sooner or later. So the godly child, though young, died a hundred years old; and you could not now have bestowed her better, though the choice was Christ's, not yours. The King and Prince of ages can keep them better than you can do. While she was alive, you could intrust her to Christ, and recommend her to his keeping: now, by an after-faith, you have resigned her unto him, in whose bosom do sleep all that are dead in the Lord: you would have lent her to glorify the Lord upon earth, and he hath borrowed her, with

promise to restore her again, to be an organ of the immediate glorifying of himself in heaven. Sinless glorifying of God is better than sinful glorifying of him. And sure your prayers concerning her are fulfilled. I shall desire, if the Lord shall be pleased the same way to dispose of her mother, that you have the same mind. Christ cannot multiply injuries upon you : if the fountain be the love of God, as I hope it is, you are enriched with losses. You know all I can say better, before I was in Christ, than I can express it. Grace be with you.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

S. R.

London, Jan. 6, 1646.

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*To a CHRISTIAN GENTLEWOMAN.*

Mistress,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. If death, which is before you and us all, were any other thing but a friendly dissolution, and a change, not a destruction of life, it would seem a hard voyage, to go through such a sad and dark trance, so thorny a valley, as is the wages of sin. But I am confident, the way you know, though your foot never trode in that black shadow : the loss of life is gain to you. If Christ Jesus be the period; the end of your journey, there is no fear, you go to a friend ; and since you have had a communion with him in this life, and he hath the largest share of your love and heart, you may look death in the face with joy. If the heart be

in heaven, the remnant of you cannot be kept the prisoner of the second death: but though he be the same Christ in the other life you found him to be here, yet he is far in his excellency, beauty, sweetness, irradiations and beams of Majesty, above what he appeared here, when he is seen as he is. But the change will be in you, when you shall have new senses, and the soul shall be a more deep and more capacious vessel, to take in more of Christ; and when means, the chariot of the gospel that he is now carried in, and ordinances that convey him, shall be removed. Sure you cannot now be said to see him face to face, or to drink of the wine of the highest Fountain, as you shall do a few days hence, when you shall be so near as to be with Christ. You shall then think, that preachers, and sinful ambassadors on earth, did but mar his praises, when they spoke of him, and preached his beauty. Alas! we but make Christ less lovely, in making such insignificant, and dry, and cold, and low expressions of his highest and transcendent super-excellency, to the daughters of Jerusalem. Sure, I have often, for my own part, sinned in this thing: no doubt, angels do not fulfil their task according to their obligation, in that Christ kept their feet from falling with the lost devils: though I know, they are not behind in going to the utmost of created power; but there is sin in our praising, and sin in the quantity, besides other sins. But I must leave this, it is too deep for me. Go and see, and we desire to go with you; but we are not masters of our own diet. If in that last journey you tread on a serpent in the way, and thereby wound your heel,

as Jesus Christ did before you, the print of the wound shall not be known at the resurrection of the just. Death is but a step over time and sin to Jesus Christ, who knew and felt the worst of death. Praise and glory be to the First-begotten of the dead. The worst possibly that may be, is, that you leave behind you children, husband, and the church of God in miseries; but you cannot get them to heaven with you for the present: you shall not miss them, and Christ cannot miscount one of the poorest of his lambs: no poor one shall be amissing, ere you see them again in the day that the Son shall render up the kingdom to his Father. Not a soul of the militant company will be here within few generations. Ye may rejoice, that you got not to heaven till you knew that Jesus is there before you.

And his first salutation will make you find it is no uncomfortable thing to die. Go and enjoy your gain; live on Christ's love while you are here, and all the way: "Yet a little while, and the vision shall not tarry; it shall speak and not lie." I am more afraid of my duty, than of the Head, Christ's government: he cannot fail to bring judgment to victory. O that we could wait for our hidden life! O that Christ would remove the covering, draw aside the curtain of time, and rend the heavens and come down! That shadows and night were gone, that the day would break, and he that feedeth among the lilies would cry to his heavenly trumpeters, Make ready! His grace be with you.—Now, if I have found favour with you, and if you judge me faithful, my last suit to you is, that you would leave me a

legacy, and that is, that my name may be at the very last in your prayers ; as I desire also, it may be in the prayers of those of your Christian acquaintance with whom you have been intimate.

Your Brother in his own Lord Jesus,

S. R.

London, Jan. 9, 1646.

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*To* LADY ARDROSS.

Madam,

GRACE, mercy and peace be to you. It hath seemed good (as I hear) to him, who hath appointed bounds for the number of our months, to gather in a sheaf of ripe corn (in the death of your Christian mother) into his garner : it is the more evident, that winter is near, when apples, without violence of wind, do of their own accord fall off the tree. She is now above the winter, with a little change of place, not of a Saviour ; only she enjoyeth him now without messages, and in his own immediate presence, from whom she heard by letters and messengers before. I grant, death is to her a very new thing, but heaven was prepared of old ; and Christ enjoyed in his highest throne, and as loaded with glory, and incomparably exalted above men and angels, having such a heavenly circle of glorified spirits above, compassing the throne with a song, is to her a new thing ; but so new, as the first summer rose, or the first-fruits of that heavenly field, or as a new paradise to a traveller, broken and worn out

of breath with the sad occurrences of a long and dirty way. You easily judge, Madam, what a large recompense is made to all her service, her walking with God, and her sorrows, with the first cast of the soul's eye upon the face of the Lamb, that is in the midst of that fair and white army that is there; and with the first draught and taste of the fountain of life, fresh and new at the well-head: to say nothing of the enjoying of that face, without date, far more than this term of life which we now enjoy. And it cost her no more to go thither, but to suffer death to do her this piece of service; for by him, who was dead, and is alive, she was delivered from the second death: what then is the first death to the second?—All which, I hope, doth not so much mitigate and allay your grief for her part, (as truly this should seem sufficient,) as the unerring expectation of the dawning of that day upon yourself, and the hope you have of the fruition of that same King and kingdom to your own soul. Certainly the hope of it, when things look so dark on both kingdoms, must be an exceeding great quickening to languishing spirits, who are far from home while we are here. I can say no more now; but I pray that the very God of peace may establish your heart to the end. I rest, Madam,

Your Ladyship's,

At all ~~respect~~ive obedience in the Lord,

S. R.

London, Feb. 24, 1646.

To EARLSTOUN, *Senior*.

Sir,

I KNOW you have learned long ago, ere I knew any thing of Christ, that if we had the cross at our own election, we would either have freedom from it, or we would have it sugared with comforts, so as the sweet, should over-master the gall and wormwood. Christ knoweth how to breed the sons of his house, and you will give him leave to take his own way of dispensation with you; and though it be rough, forgive him; he defieth you to have as much patience to him, as he hath borne to you. I am sure there cannot be a drachm-weight of gall less in your cup; and ye would not desire he should both afflict you, and hurt your soul. When his people cannot have a providence of silk and roses, they must be content with such a one as he carveth out for them. You would not go to heaven but with company; and you may perceive that the way of those who went before you, was through blood, sufferings, and many afflictions. I do not think but you have learned to stoop, though you (as others) be naturally stiff; especially considering, that Christ hath borne the whole complete cross; and his saints, as the Apostle saith, "the remnants or leavings of the cross." And if you be near the water-side (as I know you are) all that I can say is this, Sir, that I know of that land, which is before you, that it is a goodly country; and he is before you who will heartily welcome you. He that "brought again from the



dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant," establish you to the end. Your friend and servant in Jesus Christ,

S. R.

London, May 15, 1645.

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*To his Rev. and worthy Brother, MR. GEORGE  
GILLESPIE.*

Reverend and Dear Brother,

I CANNOT speak to you. The way you know, the passage is free and not stopped, the print of the foot-steps of the Forerunner is clear and manifest, many have gone before you: you will not sleep long in the dust before the day break. I dare say nothing against his dispensation; I hope to follow quickly: the heirs, that are not there before you, are posting with haste after you. Be not heavy; the life of faith is now called for; doing was never reckoned in your accounts, (though Christ in and by you hath done more, than by twenty, yea, an hundred gray-haired and godly pastors) believing now is your last; look to that word, Gal. ii. 20. "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Ye know the *I* that liveth, and the *I* that liveth not; it is not single *ye* that liveth, Christ by law liveth in the broken debtor; it is not a life by doing or holy walking, but the living of Christ in you. If you look to yourself as divided from Christ, you must be more than heavy: all your wants, dear brother, be upon him. I fear the clay-house is a-taking down

and undermining; but it is nigh the dawning, look to the east, the dawning of the glory is near. Some traveller seeth the city twenty miles off, and at a distance; and yet within the eighth part of a mile he cannot see it. It is all keeping that you would now have, till you need it; and if sense and fruition come both at once, it is not your loss: let Christ tutor you, as he thinks good, you cannot be marred nor miscarry in his hand. Want is an excellent qualification; and no money, no price, to you, (who, I know, dare not glory in your own righteousness) is fitness warrantable enough to cast yourself upon him, who justifieth the ungodly. Some see the gold once, and never again till the race's end; it is coming all in a sum together, when you are in a more gracious capacity to tell it than now: "You are not come unto the mount that burneth with fire, nor unto blackness, darkness, and tempest; but you are come to mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling," &c. You must leave the wife to a more choice husband, and the children to a better father. If you leave any testimony to the Lord's work and covenant, (which I suppose may be needful) let it be under your hand, and subscribed before faithful witnesses.

Your loving and afflicted Brother,

S. R.

St. Andrews, Sept. 27, 1648.

*To MRS. GILLESPIE.*

Dear Sister,

I HAVE heard how the Lord hath visited you, in removing the child Archibald: I hope you see the setting down of the weight of your confidence and affection upon any created thing, whether husband or child, is a deceiving thing; and that the creature is not able to bear the weight, but sinketh down to very nothing under your confidence: and therefore you are Christ's debtor for all providences of this kind, even in that he buildeth a hedge of thorns in your way; for so you see his gracious intention is to save you (if I may say so) whether you will or not. It is a rich mercy, that the Lord Christ will be Master of your will and of your delights, and that his way is so fair, for landing of husband and children beforehand, in the country whitherto you are journeying. No matter how little you be engaged to the world, since you have such experience of cross dealing in it; had you been a child of the house, the world would have dealt more warmly with its own: there is less of you out of heaven, that the child is there, and the husband is there, but much more that your Head Kinsman and Redeemer doth fetch home such as are in danger to be lost; and from this time forward, fetch not your comforts from such broken cisterns and dry wells; if the Lord desire the rest, you must not be the creature that shall hold when he draweth. Truly, to me your case is more comfortable than if the fire-side were

well-plenished with ten children. The Lord saw you was able, by his grace, to bear the loss of husband and child; and that you are so weak and tender, as not to be able to stand under the mercy of a gracious husband living and flourishing in esteem with authority, and in reputation for godliness and learning; for he knoweth the weight of these mercies would crush you and break you: and as there is no searching out of his understanding, so he hath skill to know what providence will make Christ dearest to you; and let not your heart say, It is an ill-chosen dispensation. Now he hath opened his decree to you, say, Christ hath made for me a wise and gracious choice, and I have not one word to say on the contrary. Let not your heart charge any thing upon Christ; because he will not let you alone, nor give you leave to play the idolatress with such as have not that right to your love that Christ hath. I should wish, at the reading of this, that you may fall down and make a surrender of those that are gone, and those that are yet alive, to him: and for you, let him have all; and wait for himself, for he will come and will not tarry. Live by faith, and the peace of God guard your heart; he cannot die whose you are. My wife suffers with you, and remembereth her love to you.

Your Brother in Christ,

S. R.

St. Andrews, August, 1659.

*To the worthy and much-honoured Colonel GILBERT  
KER.*

**Much-honoured and truly worthy,**

I HOPE I shall not need to show you, that you are in greater hazard from yourself and your own spirit, which would be watched over, (that your actings for God may be clean, spiritual, purely for God, for the Prince of the kings of the earth) than you can be in danger from your enemies. O how hard is it, to get the intentions so cut off from, and raised above the creature, as to be without mixture of creature and carnal interests, and to have the soul in heavenly actings, only eyeing himself, and acting from love to God, revealed to us in Jesus Christ! You will find yourself, your delights, your solid glory (far above the thin, short, poor applauses of men) before you in God. All the creatures, all the swords, all the hosts in Britain, and in this poor globe of the habitable world, are but under him single ciphers, making no number, the product being nothing, without influence from him. And, O what of God is in Gideon's sword, when it is the sword of the Lord! I wish a sword from heaven to you, and orders from heaven to you to go out, and as much peremptoriness of a heavenly will, as to say and abide by it, "I will not, I shall not go out, except you go with me:" for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Sir, I shall wish a clean army, so far as may be, that the shout of a

King, who hath many crowns, may be among you ; and that you may fight in faith, and prevail with God first. Think it your glory, to have a sword to act, and suffer, and die, (if it please him) so being you may add any thing to the glory of Christ, the Plant of renown. Go on, worthy Sir, in the courage of faith, following the Lamb: make not haste unbelievingly; but in hope and silence keep the watch-tower and look out; he will come in his own time, his salvation shall not tarry, he shall place salvation in Britain's Zion for Israel's glory. His good-will who dwelt in the bush and it burned not, be yours, and with you. I am,

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S. R.

St. Andrews, August 10, 1650.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (1.)

Well-beloved and dear Sister,

My love in Christ remembered. I have sent to you your daughter Grissel, with Robert Gordon, who came to fetch her. I am in good hopes, that the seed of God is in her, as in one born of God, and God's seed will come to God's harvest. I have her promise, she shall be Christ's, for I have told her she may promise much in his worthy name; for he becomes caution to his Father for all such as resolve and promise to serve him. I will remember her to God. I trust you will acquaint her with good company. Remember Zion, and our necessi-

ties. I bless your daughter from our Lord, and pray the Lord to give you joy and comfort of her. Remember my love to your husband, to William and to Samuel, your sons. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours at all power in the Lord Jesus,

S. R.

Anwoth, June 6, 1624.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (2.)

Loving and dear Sister,

IF ever you would pleasure me, entreat the Lord for me, now when I am so comfortless, and so full of heaviness, that I am not able to stand under the burden any longer. The Almighty hath doubled his stripes upon me; for my wife is so sore tormented night and day, that I have wondered why the Lord tarryeth so long: my life is bitter unto me, and I fear the Lord be against me. It is (I now know by experience) hard to keep sight of God in a storm, especially when he hides himself, for the trial of his children. If he would be pleased to remove his hand, I have a purpose to seek him more than I have done. Happy are they that can make use of their soul; I am afraid of his judgments. I bless my God, that there is a death, and a heaven; I would weary to begin again to be a Christian, so bitter is it to drink of the cup that Christ drank of, if I knew not that there is no poison in it. Pray that God would not lead my wife into temptation.

Wo is my heart that I have done so little against the kingdom of Satan in my calling; for he would fain attempt to make me blaspheme God in his face; but I believe, in the strength of Him who hath put me in his work, he shall fail in that which he seeks: I have comfort in this, that my Captain Christ hath said, I must fight and overcome the world: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Desire Mr. Robert to remember me, if he love me. Grace, grace be with you, and all yours: remember Zion. Hold fast that which you have, that no man take the crown from you. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth, Nov. 17, 1629.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (3.)

Well-beloved and dear Sister,

MY love, in the Lord Jesus, remembered: I understand that you are still under the Lord's visitation, in your former business with your enemies, which is God's dealing: for, till he take his children out of the furnace that knoweth how long they should be tried, there is no deliverance; but after the sea of trouble is gone over the souls of his children, then comes the gracious long-hoped-for ebbing, and drying up of the waters. Dear sister, do not faint; the wicked may hold the bitter cup to your head, but God mixeth it, and there is no poison in it; they



strike, but God moves the rod; Shimei curseth, but it is because the Lord bids him. I tell you, and I have it from him before whom I stand for God's people, that your present troubles shall be dispersed, as the morning cloud, and God shall bring forth your righteousness as the light at noon-tide of the day. Let me entreat you in Christ's name, to keep a good conscience in your proceedings in that matter, and beware of yourself; yourself is a more dangerous enemy than I, or any without you: innocence, and an upright cause, is a good advocate before God, and shall plead for you, and win your cause; and count much of your Master's approbation. He is now as the king that is gone to a far country; God seems to be from home, (if I may say so) yet he sees the ill servants, who say, "Our Master deferreth his coming," and so strike their fellow-servants. But patience, my beloved, Christ the King is coming home, the evening is at hand, and he will ask an account of his servants; make a fair clear count to him. So carry yourself, as at night you may say, "Master, I have wronged none; behold, you have your own with advantage." O! your soul then will esteem much of the testimony of a good conscience. And thrice happy shall your soul be then, when God finds you covered with nothing but the white robe of the saints' innocence, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Put on love, and brotherly kindness, and long-suffering; wait as long upon the favour and turned hearts of your enemies, as Christ waited upon you, and as Jesus stood at your soul's door: "Be angry but sin not:" I persuade myself,

that holy unction within you, which teacheth you all things, is also saying, "Overcome evil with good." If that had not spoken in your soul, at the tears of your aged pastor, you would not have agreed, and forgiven his foolish son who wronged you; but my Master bade me tell you, God's blessing shall be upon you for it; and from him I say, Grace, grace, and everlasting peace be upon you. It is my prayer for you, that your carriage may grace and adorn the Gospel of that Lord who hath graced you. I hear your husband also was sick, but I beseech you in the bowels of Jesus, welcome every rod of God; for I find not in the whole book of God, a greater note of the child of God, than to fall down and kiss the feet of an angry God; and when he seems to put you away from him, to look up in faith and say, I shall not, I will not be put away from thee. I will pray that your husband may return in peace. Remember my dearest love to John Gordon, to whom I will write when I am strong; and to John Brown, Grissel, Samuel, William: grace be upon them. As you love Christ, keep Christ's favour. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Your Brother in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, July 21, 1630.

*To MARION MACNAUGHT. (4.)*

Well-beloved Sister,

I HAVE been thinking, since my departure from you, of the pride and malice of your adversaries, and you may not, (since you have heard the book of the Psalms so often) take hardly with this; for David's enemies, through the pride of their heart said, "The Lord will not require it," Psalm x. 13. I beseech you, therefore, in the bowels of Christ, set before your eyes the patience of your Forerunner Jesus, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously," 1 Pet. ii. 23. And since our Lord and Redeemer with patience received many a black stroke on his glorious body, and many a buffet of the unbelieving world, and says of himself, Isa. l. 6. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting;" follow him, and think not hard that you take part with Jesus of his sufferings, and glory in the marks of Christ. If this storm were over, you must prepare yourself for a new wound; for, five thousand years ago, our Lord proclaimed deadly war betwixt the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; and marvel not that one town cannot keep the children of God, and the children of the devil; for one house could not keep peaceably together Isaac the son of the promise, and Ishmael the son of the handmaid. Be you upon Christ's side of it, and care not what

flesh can do; hold yourself fast by your Saviour, howbeit you be buffeted, and those that follow him; yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: see 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." If you can possess your soul in patience, their day is coming. Worthy and dear sister, know how to carry yourself in trouble; and when you are hated and reproached, the Lord shows it to you, Psalm xlv. 17. "All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant." Psalm cxix. 92. "Unless thy law had been my delight, I had perished in mine afflictions." Keep God's covenant in your trials; hold you by his blessed word, and sin not; flee anger, wrath, grudging, envying, fretting; forgive a hundred pence to your fellow-servant, because your Lord hath forgiven you ten thousand talents: for, I assure you by the Lord, your adversaries shall get no advantage against you, except you sin, and offend your Lord, in your sufferings; but the way to overcome is by patience, forgiving and praying for your enemies, in doing whereof you heap coals upon their heads, and your Lord shall open a door to you in your trouble: wait upon him, as the night-watch waiteth for the morning; he will not tarry, go up to your watch-tower, and come not down, but by prayer, and faith, and hope, wait on: when the sea is full, it will ebb again; and so soon as the wicked are come to the top of their pride, and are waxed high and mighty, then is their change

approaching; they that believe make not haste. Now, again, I trust in our Lord, you shall by faith sustain yourself and comfort yourself in your Lord, and be strong in his power; for you are in the beaten and common way to heaven, when you are under our Lord's crosses; you have reason to rejoice in it, more than in a crown of gold, and rejoice and be glad to bear the reproaches of Christ. I rest, recommending you and yours for ever, to the grace and mercy of God. Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Feb. 11, 1631.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (5.)

Well-beloved in the Lord,

YOU are not unacquainted with the day of our communion; I entreat therefore the aid of your prayers for that great work which is one of our feast-days, wherein our well-beloved Jesus rejoiceth, and delights with us to remember that day: let us love him, and be glad and rejoice in his salvation. I am confident that you shall see the Son of God that day, and I dare in his name invite you to his banquet. Many a time you have been well entertained in his house, and he changes not upon his friends, nor chides them for too great kindness; yet I speak not this to make you leave off to pray for me, who have nothing of myself, but in so far as daily I receive from him, who is made of his Father a Fountain, at which I and others may come with thirsty souls. and

fort and stay upon God. As you still shame us all in believing, go forward in the strength of the Lord, and from my Lord I say, before whom I stand, have your eyes upon none but the Lord of armies; and the Lord shall either let you see what you long to see, or fulfil your joy more abundantly another way. And be not cast down for all that is done, your reward is laid up with God. I hope to see you laugh and leap for joy. Let me hear from you, whether you be in heaviness, or rejoicing under hope, that I may take part of your grief, and bear it with you, and get part of your joy, which is to me also as my own joy. And as to your fears for the health or life of your dear children, lay it upon Christ: and when your dear Lord taketh, let them go with faith and joy: it is a tried faith, to kiss a Lord that is taking from you. Let them be careful, during the short time that they are here, to run, and get hold of the prize. Happy are they, if they run and are not weary, until their Lord with his own hand put the crown upon their head. It is not long days, but good days, that make the life glorious and happy; and our dear Lord is gracious to us who shorteneth, and hath made the way to glory shorter than it was. You shall show this to your children, whom my soul in Christ blesseth; and entreat them by the mercies of God, and the bowels of Jesus Christ, to covenant with Jesus Christ to be his, and to make up the bond of friendship between their souls and their Christ, that they may have acquaintance in heaven, and a friend at God's right hand. Now I take my leave of you, praying Christ to fulfil your joy, and

more graces and blessings from our Lord Jesus be to your soul, your husband's and children. Grace, grace be with you.

Yours in his Master Jesus Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, March 9, 1632.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (7.)

Dearly-beloved Mistress,

My love in Christ remembered. You are not ignorant what our Lord in his love-visitation hath been doing with your soul; even letting you see a little sight of that dark trance you must go through, ere you come to glory. Your life hath been near the grave, and you were at the door, and you found the door shut fast; Christ thinking it not time to open these gates to you, till you have fought some time longer in his camp; and therefore he willeth you to put on your armour again. Indeed our fair morning is at hand, the day-star is near the rising, and we are not many miles from home; what matter of ill entertainment in the smoky inns of this miserable life? we are not to stay here, and we will be dearly welcome to him whom we go to; and I hope, when I shall see you clothed in white raiment, washen in the blood of the Lamb, and a crown upon your head, and following our Lamb, and Lord, whithersoever he goeth, you will think nothing of all these days, and you shall then rejoice, and no man shall take your joy from you. And it is certain, there is

not much sand to run in your Lord's sand-glass, and that day is at hand, and till then your Lord in this life is giving you some little feasts. It is true, you see him not now, as you shall see him then; your Well-beloved standeth now behind the wall, looking out at the window, Cant. ii. 9. and you see but a little of his face; then you shall see all the Saviour. You have cause to hold up your heart in remembrance, and hope of that fair long summer-day; for in this night of your life, wherein you are in the body, absent from the Lord, Christ's fair moon-light in his word, and sacraments, in prayer, feeling, and holy conference, hath shone upon you, to let you see the way to the city. I confess our diet here is but sparing, we get but tastings of our Lord's comforts; but the cause of that is not because Jesus is narrow-hearted, but because we are narrow-hearted; but the great feast is coming, when our hearts shall be enlarged, and the chambers of them made fair and wide, to take in the Lord Jesus. But dear Mistress, buy none of Christ's spiritual delights with sin, or fasting against your weak body; remember you are in the body, and it is the lodging-house, and you may not, without offending the Lord, suffer the old walls of that house to fall down, through want of necessary food. Your body is the dwelling-house of the Spirit, and therefore, for the love you carry to the sweet guest, give a due regard to his house of clay: when he looseth the wall, why not? welcome, Lord Jesus: but it is a fearful sin in us, by hurting the body by fasting, to loose one stone, or the least piece of timber in it; for the house is not our own,



the Bridegroom is with you yet; so fast, as that also you may feast and rejoice in him.

Yours ever in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth, Sept. 19, 1632.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (8.)

Well-beloved and dear Sister,

My tender affection in Christ remembered. I left you in as great heaviness as I was in since I came to this country; but I know you doubt not but (as the truth in Christ is) my soul is knit to your soul, and to the souls of all yours, and would, if I could, send you the largest part of my heart enclosed in this letter: but, by fervent calling upon my Lord, I have attained some victory over my heart, which runneth often not knowing whither, and of my beguiling hopes, which I know now better than I did; and trust in my Lord, to hold aloof from the enticings of a seducing heart, catching at any folly coming its way, as the woodbine or ivy goeth about the tree. I adore and kiss the providence of my Lord, who knoweth well what is most expedient for me, and for you, and your children; and I think of you, as of myself, that the Lord, who turneth (in his deep wisdom) about all the wheels and turnings of such changes, shall also dispose of that for the best to you and yours. In the presence of my Lord, I am not able, howbeit I would, to conceive amiss of you in that matter. Grace, grace for ever upon

you and your seed; and it shall be your portion, in despite of all the powers of darkness: do not make more question of this. I hear your son is entered to the school; if I had known of the day, I would have begged from the Lord, that he would have put the book in his hand, with his own hand. I trust in my Lord it is so, and I conceive hope to see him a star to give light in some room of our Lord's house; and purpose, by the Lord's grace, as I am able, (if our Lord call you to rest before me,) when you are at your home, to do the uttermost of my power to help him every way, in grace and learning, and his brother, and all your children; and I hope you would expect that of me. I am still what I was ever to your dear children, tendering their soul's happiness, and praying that grace, grace, grace, mercy and peace, from God, even God our Father, and our Lord Jesus, may be their portion; and that now, while they are green and young, their hearts may take hold of Jesus the corner-stone, and then they will not get leave to stray. Pray for me, and especially for humility and thankfulness. I have always remembrance of you, and your husband, and dear children. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Yours evermore, in my dear Lord Jesus and yours,

S. R.

Anwoth.

## To MARION MACNAUGHT. (9.)

Much-honoured and dear Mistress,

My love in Christ remembered. I am grieved at the heart to write any thing to you, to breed heaviness to you; and what I have written, I wrote it with much heaviness. But I entreat you in Christ's name, when my soul is under wrestlings, and seeking direction from our Lord (to whom his vineyard belongeth) whither I shall go, give me liberty to advise, and try all paths, to see whether he goeth before me and leadeth me: for if I were assured of God's call to your town, let my arm fall from my shoulder-blade and lose power, and my right eye be dried up, which is the judgment of the idol-shepherd, Zech. xi. 17. if I would not swim through the water at his bidding. But if you knew my doubtings and fears in that, you would suffer with me. Whether they be temptations, or impediments cast in by God, I know not; but, as I have ever entreated you, put the business out of your hand in the Lord's reference; and try of him if you have warrant of him, to seek no man in the world, but one only, when there are choice of good men to be had—howbeit they be too scarce, yet they are. And what God saith to me in the business, I resolve by his grace to do; for I know not what he will do with me, but God shall fill you with joy, ere the business be ended: for I persuade myself, our Lord Jesus hath stirred you up already to do good in the business, and you shall not lose your reward.

I have heard your husband and Samuel have been sick. The Man who is called the Branch and God's Fellow, who standeth before his Father, will be your stay and help, Zech. xiii. 7. I would I were able to comfort your soul; but have patience and stand still: he that believeth maketh not haste. This matter of Cramond, cast in at this time, is either a temptation, having fallen out at this time, or it will clear all my doubts, and let you see the Lord's will. But I never knew my own part in the business till now; I thought I was more willing to have embraced the charge in your town, than I am, or am able to attain to. I know you pray that God would resolve me what to do; and will interpret me, as love biddeth you, which thinketh not ill, and believeth all things, and hopeth all things. Would you have more than the Son of God? and you have him already. I cannot see you the next week. If my Lady come home, I must visit her. The week thereafter there will be a presbytery at Girtoun; God will dispose of the meeting. Grace upon you, and your seed and husband. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

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**TO MARION MACNAUGHT. (10.)**

Well-beloved Sister,

My love in Jesus Christ remembered. Your daughter is well, thanks be to God; I trust in him,

you shall have joy of her: the Lord bless her. I am now presently going about catechising. The bearer is in haste. Forget not poor Zion, and the Lord remember you, for we shall be shortly winnowed: "Jesus, pray for us, that our faith fail not." I would wish to see you a Sabbath with us, and we shall stir up one another, God willing, to seek the Lord; for it may be, he will hide himself from us ere it be long. Keep that which you have, you will get more in heaven. The Lord send us to the shore out of all the storms, with those who have their chamber to go in unto, spoken of Isa. xxvi. 20. Read the place yourself, and keep you within your house until the storm be past. These in haste: I bless you in God's name and all yours. Your daughter desires a Bible and a gown; I hope she will use the Bible well, which, if she do, the gown is the better bestowed. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Yours for ever in Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (11.)

Mistress,

My love in Jesus Christ remembered. I am in good health, honour to my Lord; but my wife's disease increaseth daily, to her great torment and pain night and day: she has not been in God's house since our communion, neither out of her bed. What will be the event, he that hath the keys of

the grave knows. I have been many times, since I saw you, that I have besought the Lord to loose her out of the body, and to take her to her rest. I believe the Lord's tide of afflictions will ebb again; but at present I am exercised with the wrestlings of God, being afraid of nothing more than this, that God has let loose the tempter upon my house. God rebuke him and his instruments. Because Satan is not cast out but by fasting and prayer, I entreat you remember our condition to our Lord, and entreat all good Christians, whom you know, but especially your Pastor, to do the same. It becomes us still to knock, and to lie at the Lord's door, while we die knocking. If he will not open, it is more than he has said in his word; but he is faithful. I look not to reach my home without wounds and blood. Welcome, welcome cross of Christ, if Christ be with it. I have not a calm spirit in the work of my calling here, being daily chastised; yet God hath not put out my candle, as he does to the wicked. Grace, grace be with you and all yours.

Yours in his Lord,

S. R.

Anwoth.

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To MARION MACNAUGHT. (12.)

Mistress,

My love in Christ remembered. At the desire of the bearer, whom I love, I thought to request you, if you can help his wife with your advice, for

she is in a most dangerous and deadly-like condition; for I have thought she was far changed in her carriage and life this some time past, and had hope that God would have brought her home; and now by appearance she will depart this life, and leave a number of children behind her. If you can be entreated to help her, it is a work of mercy. My own wife is in exceeding great illness night and day. Pray for us, for my life was never so wearisome to me. God hath filled me with gall and wormwood; but I believe (which holds up my head above the water) "It is good for a man," saith the Spirit of God, "that he bear the yoke in his youth." I do remember you: I pray you be humble and believe. The grace of Jesus be with your husband and children. Yours in our Christ,

S. R.

Anwoth.

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*To MARION MACNAUGHT. (13.)*

Well-beloved Sister,

My love in Christ remembered. My brother writeth to me of your heaviness, and of temptations that press you sore. I am content it be so; you bear about with you the marks of the Lord Jesus: so was it with our Lord's apostle, when he was to come with the gospel to Macedonia, 2 Cor. vii. 5. His flesh had no rest, he was troubled on every side, and knew not what side to turn him to; without were fightings, and within were fears. In the great

work of our redemption, your glorious friend, and well-beloved, Jesus, was brought to tears and strong cries, so that his face was wet with tears and blood, arising from a holy fear and the weight of the curse. I wonder many times, that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what their Lord is preparing for them. Therefore I request you in the Lord, pray for a submissive will; and pray, as your Lord Jesus bids you, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." And let it be that your faith be tried with temptation; believe you, that there is a tree in our Lord's garden that is not often shaken with the wind from all the four quarters? surely there is none. Rebuke your soul, as the Lord's prophet doth, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! why art thou disquieted within me?" In your temptations, run to the promises. Faint not, you shall see the salvation of God; else say, that God never spake his word by my mouth: and I had rather never been born, ere it were so with me: but my Lord hath sealed me. I dare not deny, I have also been in heaviness since I came from you, fearing for my unthankfulness that I am deserted; but the Lord will be kind to me, whether I will or not. I repose that much in his rich grace, that he will be loath to change concerning me. As you love me, pray for me in this particular. I recommend you to the Lord's grace, and your husband and children; the Lord Jesus be with your spirit.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

Edinburgh.



## A POSTSCRIPT.

Mistress,

I HAD not time to give my advice to your daughter Grissel, you shall carry my words therefore to her. Show her now, that, in respect of her tender age, she is in a manner as clean paper, ready to receive either good or ill; and that it were a sweet and glorious thing for her to give herself up to Christ, that he may write upon her his Father's name, and his own new name. And desire her to acquaint herself with the Book of God; the promises that our Lord writes upon his own, and performeth in them and for them, are contained there. I persuade you, when I think that she is in the company of such parents, and hath occasion to learn Christ, I think Christ is wooing her soul; and I pray God she may not refuse such a husband; and therefore I charge her, and beseech her by the mercies of God, by the wounds and blood of him who died for her, by the word of truth, which she heareth and can read, by the coming of the Son of God to judge the world, that she would fulfil your joy, and learn of Christ, and walk in Christ. She shall think this the truth of God many years after this; and I will promise to myself, in respect of the beginnings that I have seen, that she shall give herself to him that gave himself for her. Let her begin at prayer; for if she "remember her Creator in the days of her youth," he will claim kindness to her in her old age: it shall be a part of my prayers, that this may be effectuated in her, by him who is able to do exceeding

abundantly. To whose grace again I recommend you and her, and all yours.

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*To MRS. CRAIG,*

On the Death of her hopeful Son, who was drowned washing himself in a river in France.

Mistress,

YOU have so learned Christ, as now in the furnace, what dross, what shining of faith may appear, must come forth. I heard of the removal of your son Mr. Thomas; though I be dull enough in discerning, yet I was witness to some spiritual savour of the new-birth and hope of the resurrection, which I saw in the hopeful youth, when he was, as was feared, dying in this city. And since it was written and advisedly appointed, in the spotless and holy decree of the Lord, where, and before what witnesses, and in what manner, whether by a fever, the mother being at the bedside, or some other way in a far country, (dear patriarchs died in Egypt, precious to the Lord have wanted burials, Psal. lxxix. 3.) your safest will be, to be silent, and command the heart to utter no repining and fretting thoughts of the holy dispensation of God. 1. The man is beyond the hazard of dispute, the precious youth is perfected and glorified. 2. Had the youth lain years and days pained beside a witnessing mother, it had been pain and grief lengthened out to you in many portions, and every parcel would have been a little death: now his holy Majesty hath, in one portion,

brought to your ears the news, and hath not divided the grief in many portions. 3. It was not yesterday's thought, or the other year's statute, but a counsel of the Lord of old; and "who can teach the Almighty knowledge?" 4. There is no way of quieting the mind, and of silencing the heart of a mother, but godly submission: the readiest way for peace and consolation to clay-vessels, is, that it is a stroke of the Potter and Former of all things; and since the holy Lord hath loosed the hold, when it was fastened sure on your part, I know your light, and I hope your heart also will yield: it is not safe to be at pulling and drawing with the omnipotent Lord; let the pull go with him, for he is strong; and say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." 5. His holy method and order is to be adored: sometimes the husband before the wife, and sometimes the son before the mother; so hath the only wise God ordered: and when he is sent before and not lost, in all things give thanks. 6. Meditate not too much on the sad circumstances; the mother was not witness to the last sight, possibly cannot get leave to watch the son, nor to weep over his grave, and he was in a strange land: there is a like nearness to heaven out of all the countries of the earth. 7. This did not spring out of the dust: it is the art and the skill of faith to read what the Lord writes upon the cross, and to spell and construct right his meaning; often we miscall words and sentences of the cross, and either put nonsense on his rods, or burden his Majesty with slanders and mistakes, when he entertains for us thoughts of peace and love, even

to do us good in the latter end. 8. It is but a private stroke on a family, and little to the public arrows shot against grieved Joseph, and the afflicted; but ah! dead, senseless and guilty people of God; this is the day of Jacob's trouble. 9. There is a bad way of laying temptation out of memory, without any victory of faith: the Lord, who forbids fainting, forbids also despising; but it is easier to counsel than to suffer: the only wise Lord furnish patience. It were not amiss to call home the other youth. I am not a little afflicted for my Lady Kenmure's condition; I desire, when you see her, remember my humble respects to her. My wife heartily remembers her to you, and is wounded much in mind with your present condition, and suffers with you. Grace be with you.

Yours in the Lord,

S. R.

St. Andrews, May 4, 1660.

*A Letter from MR. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD to MR. WILLIAM GUTHRIE, when the army was at Stirling, after the defeat at Dunbar, and the godly in the West were falsely branded with intended compliance with the usurpers, about the time when these debates, and that difference concerning the public resolutions arose.*

Reverend Brother;

I DID not dream of such shortness of breath, and fainting in the way toward our country: I thought I had no more to do but die in peace, and bow down my sinful head, and let him put on the crown, and so end. I have suffered much; but this is the thickest darkness, and the straitest step of the way I have yet trod. I see more suffering yet behind, and I fear from the keepers of the vine. Let me entreat of you, that you would press upon the Lord's people, that they would stand far off from these merchants of souls come in amongst you. If the way revealed in the word be that way, we then know these spiritual teachers show not the way of salvation. Alas! alas! I am utterly lost, my share of heaven is gone, and my hope is perished, and I am cut off from the Lord, if hitherto out of the way: but I dare not unkindly judge Christ; for if it may be but permitted (with reverence to his greatness and highness be it spoken) I will before witnesses produce his own word, that he said, "This is the way, walk thou in it:" and he cannot except against his own seal. I profess I am almost broken and a

little sleepy, and would fain put off this body; but this is my infirmity, who would be under the shadow and covert of that good land, once to be without the reach and blast of the terrible one. Dear brother, help me, and get me the help of their prayers who are with you, in whom is my delight. You are much suspected of intended compliance; I mean not of you only, but of all the people of God with you. It is but a poor thing the fulfilling of my joy; but let me protest all the serious seekers of his face, his secret sealed ones, by the strongest consolations of the Spirit, by the gentleness of Jesus Christ, that Plant of renown, by your last accounts, and appearing before God, when the white throne shall be set up, be not deceived with their fair words: though my spirit be astonished at the cunning distinctions, which are found out in the matters of the covenant, that help may be had against these men; yet my heart trembleth to entertain the least thought of joining with these deceivers. Grace, grace be with you. Amen. Your own brother in our common Lord and Saviour,

S. R.

St. Andrews.

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*To my Reverend Brother, Christ's soldier in bonds,  
MR. JAMES GUTHRIE, Minister of the Gospel at  
Stirling.*

Dear Brother,

WE are very oft comforted with the word of promise; though we stumble not a little at the work of

holy Providence; some earthly men flourishing as a green herb, and the people of God counted as sheep for the slaughter, and killed all the day long; and yet both the word of promise, and works of providence are from him, whose ways are equal, straight, holy, and spotless. As for me, when I think of God's dispensations, he might justly have exposed my sinfulness, which would have been no small reproach to the holy name, and precious truths of Christ; but in mercy he hath covered these, and shapen and carved out more honourable causes of suffering, of which we are unworthy. And now, dear brother, much depends upon the way and manner of suffering, especially, that his precious truth be owned with all heavenly boldness, and a reason of our hope given in meekness and fear; and the royal crown, and absolute supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth, avouched, as becometh: for certain it is, Christ will reign the Father's King in mount Zion; and his sworn covenant will not be buried. It is not denied, but our practical breach of covenant first, and then our legal breach thereof, by enacting the same mischief, and framing it into a law, may heavily provoke our sweetest Lord: yet there are a few names in the land, that have not defiled their garments, and a holy seed, on whom the Lord will have mercy, like the four or five olive-berries upon the top of the shaken olive-tree, and their eye shall be toward the Lord their Maker. Think it not strange, that men devise against you: whether it be to exile, the earth is the Lord's; or perpetual imprisonment, the Lord is your

light and liberty; or a violent and public death, for the kingdom of heaven consists in a fair company of glorified martyrs and witnesses, of whom Jesus Christ is the chief witness, who for that cause was born, and came into the world. Happy are you, if you give testimony to the world of your preferring Jesus Christ to all powers; and the world make the innocence and Christian loyalty of his defamed and despised witnesses in this land to shine to after generations, and will take the Man-child up to God and to his throne, and prepare a hiding place in the wilderness for the mother, and cause the earth to help the woman. Be not terrified; fret not; forgive your enemies; bless and curse not; for though both you and I should be silent, sad and heavy is the judgment and indignation from the Lord, that is abiding the unfaithful watchmen of the Church of Scotland. The souls under the altar are crying for justice, and there is an answer returned already: the Lord's salvation will not tarry. Cast the burden of wife and children on the Lord Christ, he cares for you and them: your blood is precious in his sight. The everlasting consolations of the Lord bear you up, and give you hope: for your salvation (if not deliverance) is concluded. Your own brother,

S. R.

St. Andrews, Feb. 15, 1661.



**To ABERDEEN.**

Reverend and dearly-beloved in the Lord,

GRACE be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. There were some who rendered thanks, with knees bowed to him, "of whom is named the whole family in heaven and earth, when they heard of your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus;" and rejoiced not a little, that where Christ was scarce named in savouriness and power of the gospel, even in Aberdeen, that there Christ hath a few precious names to him who shall walk with him in white. We looked on it (he knoweth, whom we desire to serve in our spirit, in the gospel of his Son) as a part of the fulfilling of that, "The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose;" but now it is more grievous to us than a thousand deaths, when we hear that you are shaken, and so soon removed from that, which you once acknowledged to be the way of God. Dearly beloved, the sheep follow Christ, who calleth them by name; a stranger they will not follow: but they flee from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger. You know the way, by which you were sealed to the day of redemption; and you received the Spirit by the hearing of faith: part not with that way, except you see there be no rest for your soul therein; neither listen to them that say, Many were converted under Episcopal as well as under Presbyterianial government:

and yet the godly gave testimony against the Bishops; for the instruments of conversion loathed Episcopacy, with the ceremonies thereof, and never sealed it with their sufferings. But we shall desire instances of any engaged by oaths, and by the sufferings of the faithful messengers of God, and the manifestation of the Lord's presence, in the way you now forsake, who yet turned from it, and went one step toward sinful separation, and did it in that way you now aim at, and did yet flourish and grow in grace; but we can bring proofs of many who left it, and went further on to abominable ways of error. And you have it not in your power, where you shall stop, having once left the way of God; and many we know lost peace and communion with God, and fell into a condition of withering, and, not being able to find their lovers, were forced to return to their first Husband. We entreat you to consider what a stumbling it is to malignant opposers of the way and cause of God, who with their ears heard you, and with their eyes saw you, so strenuously take part with the godly in their sufferings, and profess yourselves for religion, truth, doctrine, government of the house of God, his covenant and cause; if now you build again what you once destroyed, and destroy what you built; and shall you not make yourselves, by so doing, transgressors? How shall it wound the hearts of the godly, stain the profession, darken the glory of the gospel, shake the faith of many, weaken the hands of all, if you, and you first of all in this kingdom, shall stretch out the hand to raze the walls of our Jerusalem, by reason of which the Lord made her

terrible as an army with banners? for, when kings came, and saw the palaces and bulwarks thereof, they marvelled and were troubled, and hasted away; fear took hold of them there, and pain as of a woman in travail. And we shall be grieved, if you shall be heirs to the guiltiness of breaking down the same hedge of the vineyard, for the which the sad indignation of God pursueth this day the royal family, many nobles, houses great and fair, and all the prelatical party in these three kingdoms. And when your dear brethren are weak and fainting, shall we believe that you will leave us, and be divided from this so blessed a conjunction? The Lord Jesus Christ, we trust, shall walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and be with us, if you will be gone from us. Beloved in the Lord, we cannot but be persuaded of better things of you; and we shall not conceal from you, that we are ignorant what to answer, when we are reprov'd on your behalf, in regard that your change to another gospel-way (which the Lord avert) is so much the more scandalous, that the sudden alteration, unknown to us before, now overtaketh you, when men come amongst you, against whom the furrows of the field of Scotland do complain. Forget not, dear brethren, that Christ hath now the fan in his hand, and this is also the day of the Lord, that shall burn as an oven; and that Christ now sitteth as a refiner of silver, purifying the sons of Levi, and purging them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness: and these that keep the word of his (not their own) patience, shall be delivered from the hour.

of temptation, that shall come on all the earth to try them. If you exclude all non-converts from the visible city of God, in which daily, multitudes in Scotland, in all the four quarters of the land, above whatever our fathers saw, throng into Christ, shall they not be left to the lions and wild beasts of the forest, even to Jesuits, Seminary-priests, and other seducers? for the magistrate hath no power to compel them to hear the gospel, nor have you any church-power over them, as you teach: and they bring not love to the gospel and to Christ out of the womb with them, and so they must be left to embrace what religion is most suitable to corrupt nature; nor can it be a way approved by the Lord in Scripture, to excommunicate from the visible church all the multitudes of non-converts, baptized, and visibly within the covenant of grace, which are in Great Britain, and all the reformed churches; and so to shut the gates of the Lord's gracious calling upon all these, because they are not, in your judgment, chosen to salvation, when once you are within yourselves; for how can the Lord call Egypt his people, and Assyria the work of his hands, and all the Gentiles (who for numbers are as the flocks of Kedar, and the abundance of the sea) the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, if you number infants, as many do, and all such as your charity cannot judge converts, as others do, among heathens and pagans, who have not a visible claim and interest in Christ? The candlestick is not yours, nor the house; but Christ fixeth and removeth the one, and buildeth or casteth down the other, according to his sovereignty. We

in humility judge ourselves, though the chief of sinners, the sons of Zion, and of the seed of Christ; if you remove from us, and carry from hence the candlestick, let our Father be judge; and show us, why the Lord hath bidden you come out from among us. We look upon this visible church, though black and spotted, as the hospital and guest house of sick, halt, maimed, and withered, over which Christ is Lord, Physician, and Master; and we would wait upon those that are not yet in Christ, as our Lord waited upon us and you both. We therefore, your brethren, children of one Father, cannot but, with tears and exceeding sorrow of heart, earnestly entreat, beseech and obtest you by the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and precious ransom he paid for us both, by the consolations of his Spirit, by your appearance before the dreadful tribunal of our Lord Jesus; yea, and charge you before God and the same Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and in his kingdom; break not the spirits and hearts of those to whom you are dear as their own soul, forsake not the assemblies of the people of God, let us not divide. Not a few of the people of God, in this shire of Fife, in whose name I now write, dare say, if you depart, you shall leave Christ behind you with us, and the golden candlesticks, and shall cast yourselves (we much fear) out of the hearts and prayers of thousands, dear to Jesus Christ in Scotland; therefore, before you fix your judgment and practice on any untrodden path, let a day of humiliation be agreed upon by us all, and our Father's

mind and will inquired, through our one common Saviour; and let us see one another's faces at best conveniency; and plead the interest of Christ, and be comforted, and not stumble at your ways. So, expecting your answer, we shall pray that "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, may make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ," and shall remain,

Your affectionate brother in the Lord,

S. R.

St. Andrews.

SOME OF THE

LAST WORDS OF MR. RUTHERFORD:

CONTAINING

SOME ADVICES AND EXHORTATIONS TO HIS FRIENDS  
AND RELATIONS, DURING HIS LAST SICKNESS.

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SOME days before his death, he said, "I shall shine, I shall see him as he is, I shall see him reign, and all his fair company with him; and I shall have my large share, my eyes shall see my Redeemer, these very eyes of mine, and no other for me: this may seem a strong word, but it is no fancy or delusion; it is true, it is true, let my Lord's name be exalted, and if he will, let my name be ground to pieces, that he may be all in all. If he should slay me ten thousand times ten thousand times, I'll trust." He often repeated, "'Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.'" Exhorting one to be diligent in seeking God, he said, "It is no easy thing to be a Christian, but for me, I have gotten the victory, and Christ is holding out both his arms to embrace me." At another time, to some friends about him, he said, "At the beginning of my sufferings I had

mine own fears, like another sinful man, lest I should faint, and not be carried creditably through; and I laid this before the Lord: and as sure as he ever spake to me in his word, as sure his Spirit witnessed to my heart, he had accepted my suffering; he said to me, 'Fear not: the issue shall not be simply matter of praise.' I said to the Lord, if he should slay me five thousand times five thousand times, I would trust in him; and I spake it with much trembling, fearing I should not make my attempt good. But as really as ever he spake to me by his Spirit, he witnessed to my heart, that his grace should be sufficient."

The last Tuesday night before his death, being much weighed down with the state of the public, he had that expression, "Terror hath taken hold on me, because of his dispensation." And after adverting to his own condition, he said, "I disclaim all that ever he made me will and do, and look on it as defiled and imperfect, as coming from me; and I take me to Christ for sanctification, as well as justification;" and repeating these words, "'He is made of God to me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" he added, "I close with it, let him be so, he is my All in all this."

On March the seventeenth, three gentlewomen coming to see him, after exhorting them to read the Word, and be frequent in prayer, and much in communion with God, he said, "My honourable Master and lovely Lord, my great and royal King, hath not a match in heaven or in earth; I have my own guiltiness like another sinful man, but he hath pardoned,



loved, and washed me, and given me 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' I repent not that ever I owned his cause. Those whom ye call Protesters, are the witnesses of Jesus Christ; I hope never to depart from that cause, nor side with those that have burnt the Causes of God's Wrath.

"They have broken their covenant, oftener than once or twice: but I believe 'The Lord will build Zion, and repair the waste places of Jacob.'" O, to obtain mercy, to wrestle with God for their salvation! As for this presbytery, it hath stood in opposition to me these years past: I have my record in heaven, I had no particular end in view, but was seeking the honour of God, the success of the gospel in this place, and the good of the new college, that society which I have left upon the Lord: what personal wrongs they have done me, and what grief they have occasioned to me, I heartily forgive them; and desire mercy to wrestle with God, for mercy to them and all their salvation."

The same day, Mr. James M'Gill, Mr. John Wardlaw, Mr. William Violant, and Mr. Alexander Wedderburn, (all members of the same presbytery with him) coming to visit him, he made them heartily welcome, and said, "My Lord and Master is the chief of ten thousand of thousands, none is comparable to him, in heaven or in earth. Dear brethren, do all for him; pray for Christ, preach for Christ, feed the flock committed to your charge for Christ, do all for Christ; beware of men-pleasing, there is too much of it among us. Dear brethren, you know I have had my own grievances among you

of this presbytery. He, before whom I stand, knows it was not my interest, but the interest of Jesus Christ, and the success of the gospel, I was seeking. What griefs or wrongs you have done me, I heartily forgive, as I desire to be forgiven of Christ. The new college hath broken my heart, and I can say nothing of it, but I have left it upon the Lord of the house; and it hath been, and still is my desire, that he may dwell in this society, and that the youths may be fed with sound knowledge. This is a divided visit of the presbytery, and I know so much the less what to say."

After this, he said, "Dear brethren, it may seem a presumption in me, an individual, to send a commission to a presbytery;" and Mr. M'Gill replying, It was no presumption, he continued, "Dear brethren, take a commission from me, a dying man, to them, to appear for God and his cause, and adhere to the doctrine of the covenant, and have a care of the flock committed to their charge. Let them feed the flock out of love, preach for God, visit and catechise for God, and do all for God. Beware of man-pleasing; the chief Shepherd will appear shortly: and tell them from me, dear brethren, that all the personal griefs and wrongs they have done to me, I do cordially and freely forgive them: but for the business of the new college, I have left that upon the Lord; let them see to it, my soul desires the Lord to dwell in that society, and that himself may feed the youths. I have been a sinful man, and have had my failings, but my Lord hath pardoned and accepted my labours. I adhere to the cause

and covenant, and intend never to depart from that protestation \* against the controverted assemblies. I am the man I was. I am still for keeping the government of the Kirk of Scotland entire, and would not, for a thousand worlds, have had the least finger of a hand in burning of the Causes of God's Wrath. O for grace to wrestle with God for their salvation who have done it!" And Mr. Violant having prayed at his desire, as they took their leave, he renewed his charge to them, "to feed the flock out of love."

The next morning, as he recovered out of fainting, in which they who looked on expected his dissolution, he said, "I feel, I feel, I believe in joy, and rejoice; I feed on manna." The worthy and famous Mr. Robert Blair, whose praise is in the gospel, through all this church, being with him,—(I must tell the reader, our Author had this man in high esteem, and lived in near friendship and love with him to the day of his death. A reverend minister lately fallen asleep, that was often with Mr. Rutherford, told me, he used to call Mr. Blair a worthy man of God,)—as Mr. Rutherford took a little wine in a spoon, to refresh himself, being very weak, Mr. Blair said to him, "Ye feed on dainties in heaven, and think nothing of our cordials on earth;" he answered, "They are all but dross, yet they are Christ's creatures, and out of obedience to

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\* This appears to be those papers bearing the name of representations, propositions, protestations, &c. given in by him and Messrs. Cant and Livingstone, to the Ministers and Elders met at Edinburgh, July 24, 1652.

his command, I take them;" adding, "' Mine eyes shall see my Redeemer, I know he shall stand the last day upon the earth, and I shall be caught up in the clouds to meet him in the air, and I shall be ever with him: and what would you have more? there is an end;" and stretching out his hand, he again replied, " There is an end." A little after, he said, " I have been a wretched sinful man, but I stand at the best pass that ever a man did; Christ is mine, and I am his;" and spake much of the white stone, and the new name. Mr. Blair, who loved to hear Christ commended, with all his heart said to him again, " What think ye now of Christ?" to which he replied, " I shall live and adore him: glory, glory, to my Creator, and to my Redeemer for ever: glory shines in Emmanuel's land."

In the afternoon of that day, he said, " O! that all my brethren, in the public, may know what a Master I have served, and what peace I have this day: ' I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with his likeness.'" And he said, " This night shall close the door, and put my anchor within the vail, and I shall go away in a sleep, by five of the clock in the morning;" which exactly fell out according as he had told that night. Though he was very weak, he had often this expression, " O for arms to embrace him! O for a well-tuned harp!" And he exhorted Dr. Colvil (a man that complied with Episcopacy afterwards) to adhere to the government of the Kirk of Scotland, and to the doctrine of the covenant; and to have a care that youth were fed with sound knowledge;—and ex-

pressed his desire that Christ might dwell in that society, and that vice and profaneness might be borne down;—and the Doctor being a professor in the new college, he told him, that he heartily forgave him all offence he had done him.

He spake likewise to Mr. Honeyman, who came to see him, (the man who afterwards not only submitted to the Episcopal government, but wrote in defence of it, and was made Bishop of Orkney,) and desired him to tell the presbytery to appear for God and his cause and covenant, saying, “The case is not desperate, let them be in their duty.” And directing his speech to Dr. Colvil and Mr. Honeyman, he said, “Stick to it. You may think it an easy thing in me, a dying man, that is now going out of the reach of all that man can do, but he, before whom I stand, knows I dare advise no colleague or brother to do what I would not cordially do myself, upon all hazard: and as for the Causes of God’s Wrath, that men have now condemned, tell Mr. James Wood from me, that I had rather lay my head down on a scaffold, and suffer it to be chopped off many times, were it possible, before I had passed from them.” And to Mr. Honeyman, he said, “Tell Mr. James Wood from me, I heartily forgive him all wrongs he has done me: and desire him, from me, to declare himself the man that he is, still for the government of the Kirk of Scotland.”

And truly Mr. Rutherford was not deceived in him, for the learned, pious, and worthy Mr. Wood was true and faithful to the Presbyterian government; nothing could bow him to comply, in the least

degree, with the abjured prelacy; so far from that, that apostacy and treachery of others, whom he had too much trusted, broke his upright spirit, especially the aggravated defection and perfidy of one whom he termed Judas, Demas, and Gehazi, concentrated in one, after he found what part he acted to the Kirk of Scotland, under trust. For this Mr. Wood went to the grave a man of sorrows, and left his testimony behind him to the work of God in this land, which has been in print a long time ago. I owe this piece of justice to the memory of this great man; and to show that the only differences between Mr. Rutherford and him, were occasioned by Mr. Wood's joining with the promoters of the public resolutions of that time, but Mr. Rutherford ever spoke of him with regard, and as a good man whom he loved. Afterwards, when some spoke to Mr. Rutherford of his former painfulness and faithfulness in the work of God, he said, "I disclaim all that; the object I would be at is redemption and forgiveness through his blood: 'Thou shalt show me the path of life, in thy sight is fulness of joy.' There is nothing now between me and the resurrection; 'But to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.'" Mr. Blair saying, "Shall I praise the Lord for all the mercies he has done for you, and is to do?" He answered, "O for a well-tuned harp!" To his child he said, "I have again left you upon the Lord; it may be you will tell this to others, that the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage; I bless the Lord that gave me counsel."

## MR. RUTHERFORD'S TESTIMONY

TO THE

### *Covenanted Work of Reformation,*

From 1638 to 1649.

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THOUGH the Lord needeth not a Testimony from such a man as I, if I, and all the world should be silent, the very stones would cry. It is more than debt, that I should confess Christ before men and angels. It would satisfy me not a little, that the throne of my Lord Jesus were exalted above the clouds; and that all possible praise and glory were ascribed to him; that, by his grace, I might put my seal, such as it is, unto that song, even the new song of those who, with a loud voice, sing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." And blessed were I, could I, in faith, say Amen to that song of "the angels around the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, whose number is ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom,

and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." And if I heard "every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever." I believe the doctrine of the holy prophets, and the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, contained in the Scriptures, to be the undoubted truth of God; and a perfect rule of faith, and the only way of salvation. And I acknowledge the sum of the Christian religion, exhibited in the Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformed Protestant churches; and in the National Covenant, divers times sworn to by the King's Majesty, the State, and Church of Scotland; and sealed by the testimony and subscription of professors of all ranks. As also in the Solemn League and Covenant of the three Kingdoms. And I judge, and in conscience believe, that no power on earth can absolve, and liberate the people of God from the sacred ties of the oath of God. I am persuaded that Asa acted warrantably, in making a law, that the people should stand to the covenant; in receiving into the covenant such as were not of his kingdom, 2 Chron. xv. 9, 10. As did also Hezekiah, in sending a proclamation through all the tribes, "That they should come and keep the passover unto the Lord at Jerusalem," 2 Chron. xxx. 6, 7. though their own princes did not go along with them: yea, and it is nature's law, warranted by the Word, that nations should encourage and stir up



one another to seek the true God. It is also prophesied, that divers nations should excite one another in this way: "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways." "And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." There is also a clear prophecy to be accomplished under the New Testament, "That Israel and Judah shall go together, and seek the Lord. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." It is also foretold, that different nations shall confederate with the Lord, and with one another: "In that day there shall be a high-way out of Egypt into Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come to Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

The Church of Scotland had once as much of the presence of Christ, as to the power and purity of doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, as any we read of, since the Lord took his ancient

people to be his covenanted church. The Lord stirred up our nobles to attempt a reformation in the last age, through many difficulties, and against much opposition from those in supreme authority: he made bare his holy arm, and carried on the work gloriously; his right hand getting him the victory, until the idolatries of Rome were dashed: a hopeful reformation was in some measure settled, and a sound Confession of Faith was agreed upon by the Lords of the Congregation. The people of God, according to the laudable custom of the Protestants in France and Holland, and the renowned princes in Germany, carried on the work in an innocent, self-defensive war, which the Lord did abundantly bless. When our land and church were thus contending for that begun reformation, those in authority did still oppose the work; and there were not then wanting men among ourselves, who, with some other time-serving courtiers, did not little undermine the building; and we, doting too much on sound parliaments, and lawful general assemblies, fell from our first love to self-seeking, secret banding, and little fearing the oath of God.

Afterwards, our work in public was too much in sequestration of estates, fining and imprisoning, more than in a compassionate mournfulness of spirit toward those whom we saw to oppose the work. In our assemblies, we sought more to set up a state opposite to a state; more set upon forms, citations, leading of witnesses, suspensions from benefices, than spiritually to persuade and work upon the conscience, with the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

The glory and royalty of our princely Redeemer and King was trampled on, in our assemblies. Whichever way the army and the sword, and the countenance of nobles and officers seemed to sway, that way were the censures carried. It had been better, had there been more days of humiliation and fasting in assemblies, synods, presbyteries, congregations, families; and far less adjourning commissions, new peremptory summonses, and new-drawn up processes. And if the meekness and gentleness of our Master had got so much place in our hearts, that we might have waited on gainsayers, and parties contrary minded; and driven gently, as our Master Christ, who loves not to over-drive, but carries the lambs in his bosom.

If the word of truth in the Scriptures be a sufficient rule, holding forth what is a Christian army, whether offensive or defensive, whether clean or sinfully mixed, then must we leave the question between our public brethren and us, to be determined by that rule; but if there be no such rule in the word, then the confederacies of the people of God, with the idolatrous Israelites, and with their heathen neighbours, are not to be condemned. But they are often reprov'd and condemned in Scripture. To deny the Scripture to be a sufficient rule in this case, were to accuse it of being imperfect and defective: a high and unjust reflection on the Holy Word of God. Beyond all question, the written word doth teach what is a right constituted court, and what not, Psalm x. What is a right constituted house, and what not, Josh. xxiv. 15. What is a true

church, and what is a synagogue of Satan, Rev. ii. We are not for an army of saints, and free of all mixture of ill-affected men; but it seems a high prevarication for churchmen to counsel and teach, that the weight of the affairs of Christ should be laid upon the whole party of such as have been enemies to our cause, contrary to the word of God, and the declarations, remonstrances, and solemn warnings of his church, whose public protestations the Lord did admirably bless, to the encouragement of the godly, and the terror of all the opposers of the work.

Since we are very shortly to appear before our dreadful Sovereign, we cannot pass from our protestation, trusting we are therein accepted of him; though we should lie under the imputation of dividing spirits and unpeaceable men. We acknowledge all due obedience in the Lord, to the King's majesty; but we disown that ecclesiastical supremacy in, and over, the church, which some ascribe to him: that power of commanding external worship, not appointed in the word; and laying bonds upon the consciences of men, where Christ has made them free. We disown antichristian Prelacy, bowing at the name of Jesus, saints' days, canonizing of the dead, and other such corrupt inventions of men, and look upon them as the high way to Popery.—Alas! now there is no need of a spirit of prophecy, to declare what shall be the woful condition of a land that hath broken covenant, first practically, and then legally; and what shall be the day of the dumb watchmen of Scotland? Where will we leave our glory, and what if Christ depart out of our land? We verily judge they are

most loyal to the king's majesty, who desire the dross may be separated from the silver, and the throne established in righteousness and judgment. We are not (our witness is in heaven) against his Majesty's title by birth to the kingdom, and the right of the royal family: but that the controversy of wrath against the royal family may be removed; that the huge guilt of the throne may be mourned for before the Lord; and that his majesty may stand constantly, all the days of his life, to the covenant of God, by oath, seal, and subscription, known to the world; that so peace, and the blessings of heaven, may follow his government; that the Lord may be his rock and shield; that the just may flourish in his time; that men fearing God, hating covetousness, and of known integrity and godliness, may be judges and rulers under his Majesty. And they are not really loyal and faithful to the supreme magistrate, who wish not such qualifications in him. We are not, in this particular, contending, that a prince who is not a convert, or a sound believer, falls from his royal dominion: the Scriptures warrant us to pray for, and obey in the Lord, princes and supreme magistrates, that are otherwise wicked, and to render all due obedience to them: Rom. xiii. 2, 5. Titus iii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 18. Our souls should be afflicted before the Lord, for the burning of the causes of God's wrath; a sad practice, too like the burning of the roll by Jehoiakim, Jer. xxxvi. 23. In these controversies, we should take special heed to this, that Christ is a free independent Sovereign, King, and Lawgiver. The Father hath appointed

him his own King in mount Zion; and he cannot endure that the powers of the world should encroach upon his royal prerogative, and prescribe laws to him. This presumption is not far from that of the citizens that hated him, Luke xix. 24. "He shall not rule over us;"—and from the intolerable pride of those who are for breaking asunder the bands of the Lord and his Anointed, "and for casting away their cords from them,"—especially seeing the Man Christ would not take the office of a judge upon him, and discharged his disciples from exercising a civil lordship over their brethren. True it is, the godly magistrate may command the ministers of the gospel to do their duty, but not under the penalty of ecclesiastical censures, as if it were proper to him to call and uncall, depose and suspend, from the holy ministry. The lordly spiritual government, in and over the church, is given unto Christ, and none else; he is the sole ecclesiastical Lawgiver. It is proper to him to smite with the rod of his mouth; nor is there any other shoulder, in heaven or in earth, that is able to bear the government. As this hath been the great controversy between our Lord Jesus and the powers of the world, from the beginning, so it has ruined all that opposed him. Christ has proved a rock of offence to them; they have been dashed in pieces by the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, Dan. ii. 34, 35. And the other powers that enter the lists with him, shall have the same dismal exit: "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; and on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder," Matth. xxi. 44.

As the blessed prophets and apostles of our Lord contended not a little with the rulers of the earth, that Christ should be the Head Corner Stone; and that Christ is the only Head of the church, as sure as that he died, was buried, and rose again. It is a victorious and prevailing truth; not only preached and attested by the ambassadors of the Lord of Hosts, but confirmed by blood, martyrdom, and suffering.

Many precious saints have thought it their honour to suffer shame for the name of Jesus; and it is beyond doubt, that passive suffering for the name of Christ, comes nearest to that noble example, wherein Christ, "though a Son, learned obedience by the things which he suffered," Heb. v. 8. Now, blessed is the soul who loves not his life unto the death; Rev. xii. 11. for on such rests the Spirit of glory and of God, 1 Pet. iv. 14. We cannot but say it is a sad time to this land at present, it is a day of darkness, and rebuke, and blasphemy. The Lord hath covered himself with a cloud in his anger; we looked for peace, but behold evil: our souls rejoiced, when his majesty did swear the covenant of God, and put thereto his seal and subscription, and afterwards confirmed it by his royal promise; so that the subjects' hearts blessed the Lord, and rested upon the healing word of a prince. But now, alas! the contrary is enacted by law, the carved work broken down, and we are brought into the former bondage and chaos of prelatic confusion. The royal prerogative of Christ is pulled from his head, and after all the days of sorrow we have seen,

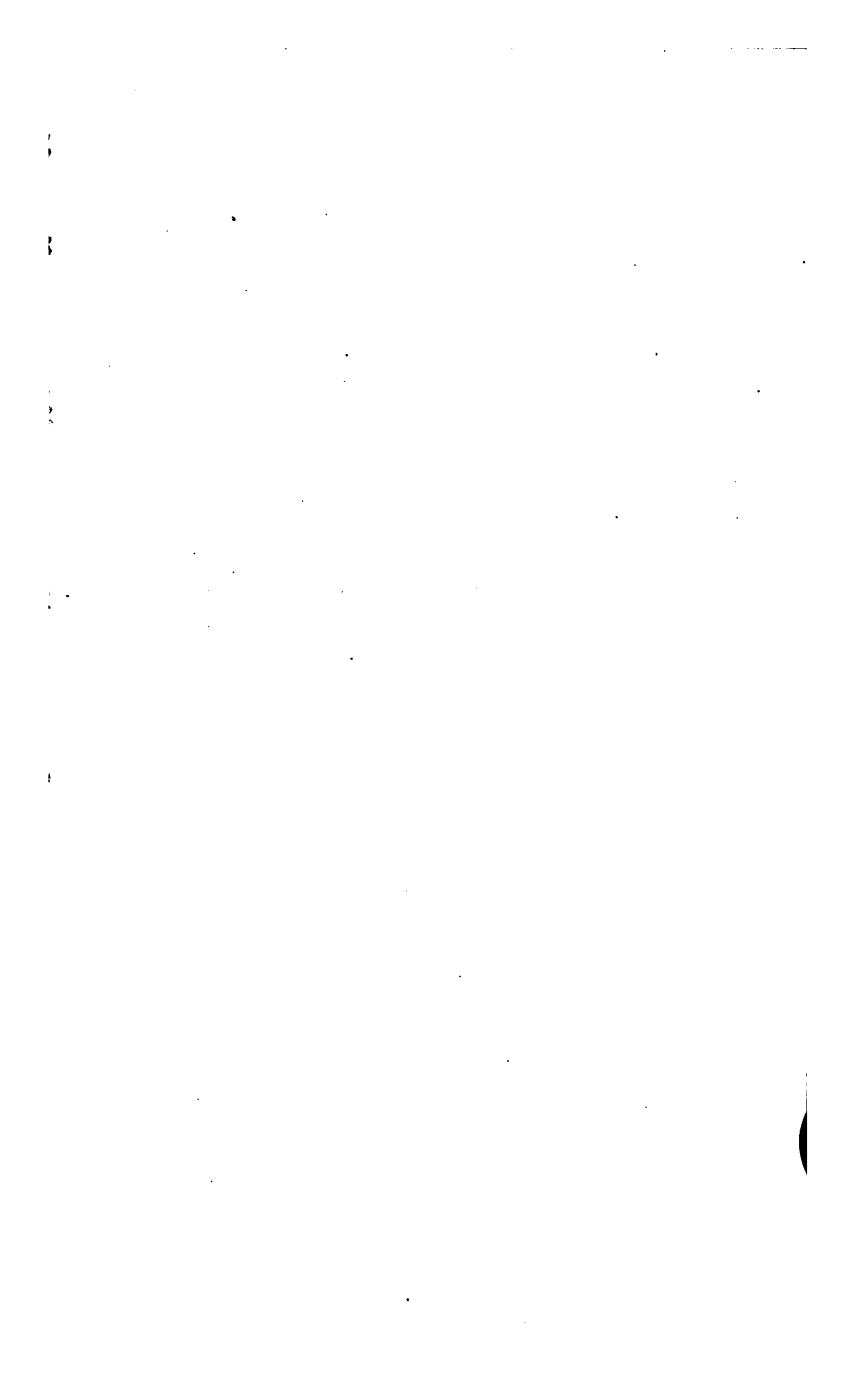
we have just cause to fear we shall be made to eat that book wherein is written "mourning, and lamentation, and woe!" Yet we are to believe, Christ will not so depart from the land, but that a remnant shall be saved; and he shall reign a victorious conquering King to the ends of the earth. O that there were nations, kindreds, tongues, and all the people of Christ's habitable world, encompassing his throne with cries and tears for the Spirit of supplication, to be poured down upon the inhabitants of Judah for that effect!

**FINIS.**

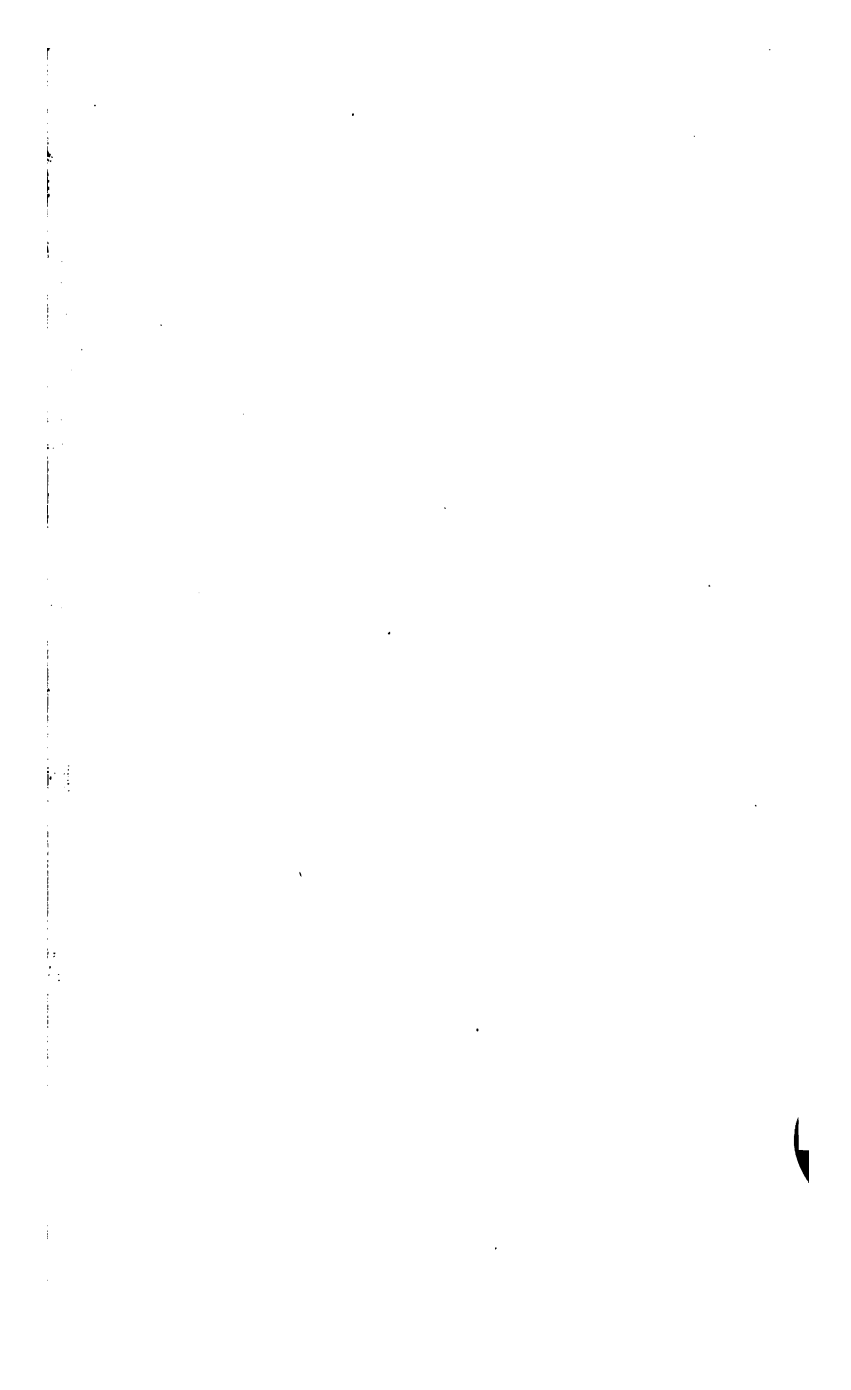




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